



Buddy and me
Philip Norman on
his teenage love
Magazine

Polly Toynbee
The battle of Harriet
and Barbara

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THE INDEPENDENT

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SATURDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 1996

WEATHER Sunny spells, light winds

50P (IR 65P)

Eclipsing the moon: Nuria Moreno as Maria in Lindsay Kemp's new musical *Varieté*, which opens at the Hackney Empire, in London, on Monday

Photograph: Laurie Lewis

BBC plans eight pay channels

MATHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

The BBC last night confirmed plans to launch eight pay-TV channels in the United Kingdom next summer, as part of its high-stakes bid to develop the corporation into a global television company.

The new channels, including high-brow arts and culture, documentaries, lifestyle, sports and entertainment, will be developed as a £200m joint venture with Flextech, the UK cable and satellite company controlled by United States media baron John Malone's TCI.

The BBC also plans to work with TCI's US associate, Discovery, to develop channels in the US, in a separate deal worth up to \$500m (£325m). In each case, the BBC would contribute programming but invest no money.

The news will be a huge disappointment to BSkyB, Rupert Murdoch's satellite giant, which had been eager to do its own channel development deal with the BBC. But a BBC source said an agreement with Mr Murdoch, who dominates the UK pay-television market, would have been "politically and strategically impossible".

All the same, the channels, which the BBC said would be made available to satellite and cable viewers, could still be distributed as part of BSkyB's existing multi-channel package, depending on the outcome of talks in coming months.

Roger Luard, chief executive of Flextech, said: "I think BSkyB is likely to be interested in carrying the new services."

The confirmation that Flextech and the BBC had entered "exclusive negotiations" leading to a final agreement by the end of year marks the most concrete sign yet of the Corporation's strategy for the era of multi-channel television.

But the deal is sure to revive concerns, none the less, that the BBC is requiring licence fee payers to fork out subscription fees even for repeats of archive or library programming already paid for by the taxpayer.

The negotiations, which have taken more than two months, were led on the BBC side by Matthew Symons, a former senior editor at *The Independent*.

According to sources at Flextech and the BBC, he is in line to become chief executive of the new joint venture.

In separate negotiations, not yet completed, Flextech is also planning to buy out other shareholders in UK Gold. As a result, Pearson and Cox Communications of Atlanta would take non-voting stakes in Flextech.

"Both Flextech and Discovery have successful track records in the development of subscription channels," Bob Phillips, chief executive of BBC Worldwide, the Corporation's commercial arm, said. Richard Emery, managing director of BBC Worldwide Television, added: "We believe this will greatly increase our ability not only to augment the licence fee but also to maximise in future the commercial value of BBC programmes."

Even more lucrative could be the US joint venture with Discovery. According to a senior BBC source involved in the negotiations, the deal "offers us access to the US market, something we have never had before, and that should give the BBC the ability to become a much bigger global player."

Adam Singer, president of the international arm of TCI said the deal "shows the power of the global alliance we can build".

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Israel unrepentant after killings at Muslim shrine

Patrick Cockburn
in Jerusalem

Israeli soldiers killed three Palestinians and wounded 50 when they opened fire on worshippers at al-Aqsa, the third holiest Muslim shrine, in Jerusalem yesterday in a shooting sure to fuel violence in the West Bank and Gaza.

The incident at the end of Friday prayers ended hopes that fighting which flared between Israelis and Palestinians on Thursday might die away. In other incidents six Palestinians and two Israeli border policemen were killed.

The shooting at Temple Mount started when several thousand Israeli police and soldiers who had been stationed in and around the gates of the compound opened fire, saying that Palestinians were throwing stones at Jews worshipping at the Western Wall on which the al-Aqsa mosque sits.

"Most of us were praying inside the Mosque itself so we did not know what was happening when the firing started," said Khalil Abed Rabbo, a Palestinian journalist. "The crowd was not very big and most of them were old people or women because the Israeli troops had not allowed Palestinian young men to reach al-Aqsa."

Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, accused Israeli police of attacking the worshippers in Jerusalem, despite what he said were late-night telephone assurances by Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, that he was interested in trying to cool the situation in the city.

"What is going on is against what we had agreed upon last night," Mr Arafat said. "The attack against the worshippers inside the mosque is something we cannot accept."

News of the Jerusalem confrontation—in which police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at

stone throwers—triggered fresh gun battles between Palestinian police and Israeli troops in West Bank and Gaza.

In one of the worst clashes,

Israeli helicopter gunships fired

Palestinians. Six Israeli soldiers, including a senior officer, were reported wounded.

The battles signalled that

Mr Arafat's control over his army

people, and especially over

Inside

"Under Netanyahu's leadership Israel is being dragged again and again into impulsive and irresponsible actions. It is humiliating the Palestinians and treating them with contempt... Netanyahu today represents all that is arrogant and belligerent in Israeli politics—those very traits we had just begun to recover from!"

Novelist's lament: David Grossman, Page 15

Israel on the brink, pages 8, 9;
Leading article, page 13

at Palestinian gunmen in the southern Gaza Strip, and Israel radio said tanks were surrounding the area. Israel radio said shots were being fired from Egyptian territory, apparently by

the 30,000 armed men under his control, was slipping away.

Sources close to Mr Arafat said that after the latest fighting, the Palestinian leader issued fresh orders to all commanders

to stop any attacks on Israelis, if necessary by force.

Throughout the day, Arafat's Voice of Palestine had been broadcasting appeals for calm, but tens of thousands took to the streets anyhow, marched toward Israeli positions and hurled stones.

At a combative news conference, Mr Netanyahu blamed Mr Arafat for the violence. The Likud leader was unrepentant about his decision to open the archaeological tunnel that runs beneath the Wailing Wall, the Herodian retaining wall of the ruined Second Jewish Temple, now Islam's third holiest site, and repeated his contention that Mr Arafat "cynically" used the tunnel as an excuse to stir up Arab passions against Israel and force his government into peace concessions.

Attending a tense meeting of

the United Nations Security Council, the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, yesterday spearheaded criticism of Israel

over the unrest in Gaza and on the West Bank, laying the blame on the Israeli government and urging it to take concrete steps to defuse the crisis.

Mr Rifkind told the session that the violence had been "predictable". He said Israel should take four initiatives to prove its commitment to the peace process, including the closing, temporarily at least, of the tourist tunnel alongside Jerusalem's Temple Mount.

Speaking to *The Independent*, Marwan Barghouti, a senior lieutenant of Yasser Arafat, said Israel can expect a wave of suicide bomb attacks in revenge for the deaths of some 50 Palestinians at the hands of the Israeli army and police.

He said that it was almost inevitable that Hamas, whose suicide bombs killed 58 people in Israel earlier this year would make more suicide attacks in order to get the support of the people" by capitalising on Palestinian anger.

"His satire is exquisitely poised,
his storytelling gripping"

The Independent

IAIN BANKS
WHIT



"Banks is a phenomenon ...
I suspect we have actual laws
against this sort of thing"

WILLIAM GIBSON

BREAK INTO BANKS

OUT NOW IN PAPERBACK

ABACUS

When the Taliban came, Kabul fell silent and women covered their heads

Eyewitness: Sarah Horner watched the end of Najibullah's reign

As recently as Thursday morning the Afghan government said it had pushed back the Taliban militia, who were attacking Kabul from the east. But by the afternoon a short drive eastwards to check on government positions showed something was clearly wrong. Government troops were moving away from the front. Minutes later, incoming fire was landing all around us. Soldiers disappeared into dilapidated huts and everyone threw themselves on the floor.

I turned round and headed quickly back to the city centre. The Taliban clearly were getting close. As darkness fell the guns started up. Shells flew in and out and Kabul held its breath, wondering what the night would bring.

Most of Kabul's expatriate workers live in an eastern suburb called Wazir Akbar Khan, a few minutes' drive from the Microray flats, where government soldiers were dug in. Wazir was also a spot favoured by government commanders, many of whom had already packed up and left. Everyone else headed down to hastily equipped cellars while the houses shook from artillery fire.

Early on Friday morning a bright, almost full moon shone over Kabul. Rapid exchanges of fire were interspersed with eerie silences. The city lay in darkness



and those with generators did not use them. It was a good night to keep a low profile. In the basement, trying to sleep I listened to the hiss and crackle of the

UN walkie-talkie, before it suddenly jumped to life. "Five people are in the UN compound, they want to see out special guest," it says. The special guest in

the compound was Dr Najibullah, the former president ousted by the Mujahedin, who for four and a half years had taken refuge in the UN compound.

Dr Najibullah's compound was in the centre of the city, so I knew that the Taliban were there already. The Taliban had taken Kabul. I leapt out of bed and looked outside. The road from the east was one street away. A column of tanks was rolling in. Horns were tooting and people cheering. Soon I heard that Dr Najibullah had been taken from the compound by force, possibly to the presidential palace. Was he the mastermind behind the mysterious Taliban? Anything seemed possible. A short time passed and the Taliban returned to the UN compound, this time to take away Dr Najibullah's brother.

As dawn broke the news filtered through. Both men had been executed, shot and strung up by the neck at one entrance of the presidential palace. Visiting the sight, I observed the grotesque display. The back of Dr Najibullah's head was missing and he was peppered with bullets. His brother hung beside him, dressed in smart jeans. There was a party of sorts, the place was packed with Afghans who had come by bike or car to watch. One thing caught my attention. Few women were about and the ones who were there, even the girls, were wearing scarves.

Tide of the Taliban, page 10
Obituary, page 16

QUICKLY

Brush with tar kings

A British legal firm is taking on

two of the world's largest tobacco

companies on a "no win, no fee"

basis as lung-cancer victims demand millions of pounds in compensation.

Page 3

Hill signs for Arrows

Damon Hill, 36, the leader in

the Formula One world champion-

ship, and recently dropped by Williams Renault, last night signed for the low-profile TWR Arrows team.

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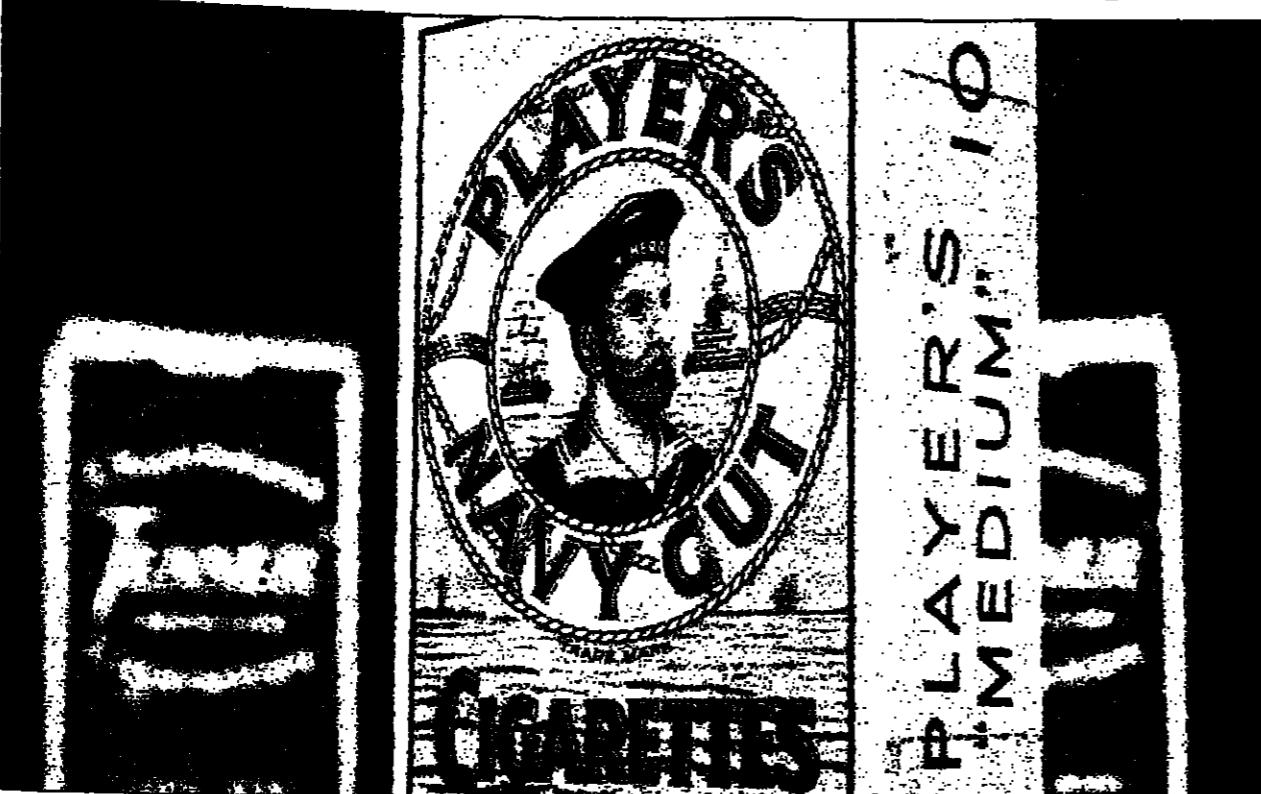
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Smoking crusade: Cancer victims seek millions as 'no win, no fee' law firm takes on tobacco giants



Worth a packet: Top sellers that came from the Imperial Tobacco stable

Photograph: Brian Harris

Tarred with the brush of blame

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Legal Affairs Editor

A British legal firm is taking on two of the world's largest tobacco companies on a "no win, no fee" basis as lung cancer victims demand millions of pounds in compensation.

In what will be the first group legal action by British smokers, 40 victims of the disease will claim that the two companies, Gallaher and Imperial Tobacco Group failed to cut tar levels in their cigarettes when it became clear that this would have reduced cancer among smokers.

The group alleges that the manufacturers, which produce four-fifths of Britain's cigarette intake, negligently failed to comply with a legal duty of care to minimise risk.

Leigh, Day & Co, the firm co-ordinating the case, decided to use a US-style contingency fee agreement - the first involving a group action since the principle was introduced a year ago - after the Legal Aid Board pulled the financial plug on claimants in July.

The decision to press ahead with the ground-breaking action will be a blow to Gallaher, the makers of Benson & Hedges and Silk Cut, and Imperial, which makes Embassy, Players and Capstan.

Ash, the Campaign for Freedom from Tobacco, urged brokers and investors to take "careful note" of the legal action when

"The lawyers are confident they can win and believe there is a just case to answer"

considering whether to invest in the tobacco industry. There were now good financial, as well as moral, reasons for not investing in an industry with an increasingly bleak future, it said.

There has been an avalanche of lawsuits in America from individuals and from states hoping to recoup the costs of treating smokers' illnesses. Tobacco shares tumbled by about 20 per cent last month after a smoker in Jacksonville, Florida, won \$750,000 after contracting lung cancer.

In another case in Indianapolis, Indiana, a jury dismissed a case because the claimant was more than 50 per cent to blame; but held a press conference afterwards to declare that they believed the tobacco company had been culpable.

According to Martyn Day, Leigh Day's joint senior partner, the growing use of litigation in the US has been accompanied by a wave of whistle-blowing from former employees of the tobacco conglomerates, believed to be 10 in all, who are anxious to spill beans on the past activities of their companies.

Mr Day said several hundred lung cancer victims, or their surviving relatives, could join in the British action. An additional significant feature would be that one judge is



likely to be appointed to deal with all tobacco claims. The judge's decision in the group action would then become the standard against which all future claims are measured.

If the companies lost, they could be faced with a massive liability for claims arising

The way they were: From the top, how Capstan, Benson and Hedges and Embassy sold their cigarettes in a colourful and alluring style in the Fifties

Photographs: Advertising Archives

from among the 30,000 people who are believed to die each year from smoking-related illnesses.

Mr Day, who will approach the High Court for the appointment of a judge next month and who will seek a trial in October 1998, estimates that if the group action is won, the companies could be at risk of claims for the next 10 to 15 years from people who began smoking in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Assuming that an average claim is worth about £50,000, Mr Day has estimated that there is a potential legal liability of between £1bn and £2bn a year over the 10 to 15-year period.

The two companies are expected to strenuously defend the claims. Each case could well turn, in the final event, on whether the alleged negligence in not reducing tar levels at an earlier stage either caused or materially contributed to the onset of the cancers the smokers later contracted.

While Gallaher said it never commented on current or pending litigation, Imperial Tobacco said it would vigorously defend the case.

Mr Day's firm stands to lose about £3m worth of fees if it loses. It has also agreed to limit the fee it will claim if it wins so that each claimant pays out no more than 25 per cent of his or her damages as a success fee.

Other senior lawyers have agreed to work on a cash-on-results basis, including Dan Brennan QC, president of the Personal Injury Bar Association, and Professor Mark Mildred of Nottingham Law School, an expert in the field of multi-party actions.

Karen Williams, a spokeswoman for Ash, said: "The lawyers are confident they can win and believe there is a just case to answer. Over the last 20 years, companies have started to reduce the tar in cigarettes but that was a long time coming. They didn't do that when they knew the cigarettes were cancer-giving."

A small number of the 40 victims announced yesterday have died and their surviving spouses are bringing their claims. The remainder have suffered serious illness.

Martin Margolis, now 74, is typical. He contracted lung cancer 14 years ago after beginning smoking at school and continuing the habit through service in the RAF. After lung and heart surgery, he now survives with two-thirds of a lung. His illness led to the failure of a family fancy goods business and loss of a £350,000 north London home. He and his wife now live in a flat.

Another sufferer, Anthony Bywater, a 57-year-old former car worker from Birmingham, had a lung removed six years ago. He said: "It is a risk for all of us in taking on the tobacco companies, but I am confident we will end up victorious."

Charity reviews grants policy

CHARLES ARTHUR
Science Editor

The Cancer Research Campaign is to draw up a code of practice for its allocation of research grants to scientists, which it hopes will squeeze out tobacco companies trying to co-fund their work.

The move follows its angry reaction in March to the endowment by British American Tobacco (BAT) of £1.5 million to Cambridge University, for a Chair of International Relations. The CRC had considered withdrawing future research funding - worth £3 million a year

from research there, and its director Gordon McVie said at the time that he was "mighty displeased" with the university's acceptance of the money.

But yesterday the CRC announced that its council had decided to stop short of such a dramatic move. The code of practice could be ready by the end of the year.

The CRC is also commissioning urgent research into public attitudes to tobacco, the tobacco industry and its influence on the health industry. "Maybe people out there think that we should take tobacco money," said Professor McVie.

Forget Long John Silver. A new tide of piracy is menacing the high seas, page 4

yesterday. "Though I don't think so - we have had immense support from the public on this," The "tobacco" code of practice for researchers will resemble those already in place covering animal experimentation and intellectual property rights which are a condition of funding for researchers applying to the CRC at present.

Professor McVie regrets that none had been drawn up before. "We have gone to great lengths to get it right with animal experimentation, and with intellectual property - who owns what rights to the results of research. But in the past we have overlooked this issue of other sponsors of research, including tobacco companies. I don't think we should co-fund any work with them."

The Imperial Cancer Research Fund (ICRF) backed the

Designers get real to please working women

MELANIE RICKET

Real women took centre stage yesterday as Nicole Farhi, Betty Jackson and the Jean Muir label presented collections at London Fashion Week which showed the designers had a good understanding of ordinary women's daily lives.

Nicole Farhi and Betty Jackson are fast becoming regarded as the patron saints of contemporary working women. Both of their collections showed their understanding of the unpredictable British summer - you need to wear lots of gorgeous clothes (not minuscule bikinis) and a good, warm jumper always comes in handy.

The spirit of the late Miss Muir lives on in the elegant shop and showroom in London's Bruton Street, where the show was held. The team behind the label, a self-effacing bunch, are so dedicated to her memory that they will not even reveal the names of the designers. Three of them came out to take a discreet bow at the end of the salon show, and one suspects that they would feel uncomfortable sullying the name of Miss Muir with their own.

Their clothes were pretty without being prissy, and elegant without being haughty. Each garment looked like it held a secret: slightly too-wide shoulders on a garment made of the softest cream, lightweight wool hangs straight to hide a multitude of lumps and bumps - not that any of the serenely turned-out models had these. Customers will adore the belted jackets that skinned mid-thigh and the fluid black, navy, and white jersey pieces.

Stella Tennant made her first appearance on London catwalks this week at Bella Freud's show. The collection was also for real women: not the sort who work, but who play - hard. Sponsored by Motorola, the show featured the smallest mobile phone ever produced. Clipped neatly on to a tiny suede bikini, it is perfect for those important chats on the beach.



Nicole Farhi: Regarded as patron saint of working women Photograph: Ben Elwes



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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

news

Avast there! Pirates return to the high seas

Wet and wild: Kevin Costner battling it out with the forces of evil in the post-apocalyptic portrayal of *Waterworld*

British yachtsman's death in hijack bid highlights rising tide of crime

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport Correspondent

The death of a man attempting to prevent hijackers stealing his yacht off the coast of Corfu highlights the growing problem of piracy for both recreational and commercial shipping.

Keith Hedley, a British businessman, died on Thursday after being shot in a gun battle as his yacht was attacked by a group of Albanian pirates.

The attack is part of a growing trend documented by the London-based International Maritime Bureau (IMB) whose director, Pottengal Mukundan, said: "In 1994, there were 90 recorded incidents and this went up to 170 last year and 87 in the first months of 1996." Incidents range from "maritime mugging", the theft of crew's belongings by people creeping on to a ship at night, to the wholesale capture of a large ship and its cargo. The most notorious area is South East Asia, with 22 incidents off Indonesia alone this year, but piracy has also been reported frequently off West Africa and Brazil.

Recently, the IMB put out a circular alerting seafarers about a 45ft sloop which had been spotted in the bay of Sihanoukville harbour in Cam-

bodia. The ship was occupied by squatters "who have rigged up crude awnings and a cooking area". However, the IMB suspects it has been taken over by pirates as the yacht "appears to have been very carefully prepared for a cruise around the world with the best equipment including everything a yachtsman would want". The IMB,

the ship is still impounded by the Chinese authorities and no prosecution has yet been mounted against the pirates because of disputes over jurisdiction between the Cypriots and the Chinese.

There are a couple of cases each year of whole ships being hijacked and half a dozen where the complete cargo is taken. Many of these involve British ships or British officers and a British captain, John Bashforth was shot dead in 1992 off the coast of Indonesia.

Now, the merchant navy officers' union, deplores the lack of interest by the British authorities. Its spokesman, Andy Linington, said: "There must be better support from the diplomatic and consular services when these events occur because they are very traumatic. Nothing has been done about it since the tragic incident involving Capt Bashforth."

Mr Linington also called for the navy to be more prepared to protect British nationals: "The navy is helpful when a British ship is involved, but will not intervene if a foreign-flagged vessel is involved, even if there are British officers or crew on it."

"Piracy is a growing problem and happens to all shipping from yachts to supertankers."



Suspect vessel: The Sihanoukville sloop occupied by squatters which set up a special anti-piracy unit in 1992, called for any information about the owners to be passed to them.

Mr Mukundan says that the most spectacular recent incident involved a cargo ship carrying 12,000 tons of sugar, worth £3m, from Bangkok to Manila a year ago. The ship started its

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Captain tells of gun raid terror

Captain Mike Bellamy, a veteran with 35 years at sea, has experienced the horror of confronting pirates at first hand in two continents, writes Christian Wolmar

He recounted the latest incident in his union's magazine, the *Nautical Telegraph*, in an effort to warn seafarers of the dangers facing them in West Africa. Twice this year, on successive trips to Lagos, his ship has been attacked.

Capt Bellamy detects a pattern to the attacks, which take place early in the morning, and says the pirates are very well organised.

Despite the presence of nightwatchmen and armed guards, smaller boats drew up alongside his ship while it was moored at Apapa docks and began taking off cargo.

He told *The Independent*: "It is all very blatant. They seemed to be assisted by the local stevedores and the guards on my ship, with the exception who are hired out by the Navy, seemed to be too scared to act."

In the second attack, a very large ship, about 30 metres by 5 metres, drew alongside and the pirates emptied the contents of a whole container containing liner and clothing and also stole a number of air-conditioning units. Despite Capt Bellamy being alerted and blowing the ship's whistle, the thieves continued their work until their boat was highlighted by a searchlight.

Capt Bellamy is highly sceptical of the Nigerian authorities' response: "It was only when they were well out of range that the armed police began shooting at them," he said.

In all, 16 containers were broken into during the ship's two-day stay: "On the first night, they do a recce, and on the second night they target the containers with the most expensive goods."

At least, during these recent attacks, Capt Bellamy did not have a gun thrust to his head, as he had off the coast of Brazil in 1991.

"We were anchored outside Rio de Janeiro when a group came aboard and took my chief officer hostage. They burst into my cabin and forced me to open the safe with a gun at my head. They took \$23,000."

He says the pirates off the west coast of Africa do not seem yet to realise that ships may have money aboard: "I am worried that when they find out we have safes, things are going to get even nastier."

children under pressure: Nike and Reebok review conditions under which Third World youngsters work for pennies

Sports firms pledge to end child labour

LOUISE JURY

International sportswear company Reebok has called on its arch rival, Nike, to stamp out slave labour in factories making their goods.

Paul Fireman, chairman of Reebok International, invited Phil Knight, Nike's chairman, to fight "abusive workplace conditions in factories around the world".

Mr Fireman said: "With Nike's leadership in size, the combined market share strength of our brands and Reebok's own experience in human rights, a collaboration could be awesome, much stronger than either of us can accomplish alone."

The approach comes nine months after Christian Aid accused the two firms, the market leaders, as being among those exploiting workers.

The charity said trainers advertised by the likes of athlete Linford Christie sold for around £50 a pair, but the average labour costs for producing them was 46p in China and £1.19 in Thailand. In another investigation, Asian children were allegedly sewing footballs for manufacturers including Reebok for 10p an hour.

The companies have reacted indignantly to the criticisms and defended their records. Yesterday, Doug Cahn, Reebok's human rights director, again stressed its track record and how Reebok had established its own production standards, to ensure "high quality" work conditions in its factories four years ago.

"This is a heartfelt invitation on the part of Paul Fireman to take advantage of the power of the two market share leaders. It is a logical extension of the work we have done already," Mr Cahn said.

Graham Anderson, for Nike, said the company had already announced it would have independent monitoring in its factories within a year, in addition to 800 employees checking its factories daily. They would examine Mr Fireman's proposals to see what else could be done. "This is a serious issue, we are trying to make a difference to people's lives," Mr Anderson said.

Christian Aid welcomed the development. Spokesman Martin Cottingham said: "If Nike takes up Mr Fireman's offer it will be a major victory for concerned consumers who have lobbied the sports shoe com-

dustries, police and national justice ministries, rather than any new EU legislation. The self-regulatory approach is the one followed in the Safety Net proposals announced in Britain earlier this week.

"The UK measures are a very good example of what can and should be done. They will probably form the basis for our approach," the Irish minister Michael Lowry said. Legislation would be "difficult if not impossible".

Dismissing the appeal by Alban Fellows, 26, and Stephen Arnold, 24, Lord Justice Evans said: "There is enormous disquiet at the potential which the Internet offers for the international transmission of pornography, in particular for those whose perverted tastes include collecting and viewing indecent photographs of children ... Heavy deterrent sentences must be imposed when serious offences, which are not always easy to discover, come to light."

The move to clamp down on paedophiles using the Internet follows agreement by home affairs ministers meeting in Dublin on Thursday to step up police co-operation to combat paedophile rings.

Telecommunications ministers meeting yesterday in Brussels indicated they would opt to rely on a voluntary code of conduct, to be developed between the Internet in-

load child pornography in Britain, whatever its country of origin.

Mr Taylor welcomed the Court of Appeal's decision in London yesterday to uphold the convictions of two men jailed for distributing child pornography on the Internet. The court rejected their argument that images stored on computer disks did not constitute photographic images.

Britain's science and technology minister, Ian Taylor, warned, however, against over-reacting. He said only 137 of a total of 16,000 newsgroups on the Internet are thought to diffuse illegal material.

The definition of what constitutes illegal material varies considerably, raising doubt about the value of EU co-operation. But Mr Taylor said it would be an offence to down-



Paid pennies: A three-year-old Indian girl sewing a football for a living. Christian Aid has accused leading international firms of exploiting Asian children in the manufacture of luxury goods. Photograph: Marie Dorigy

Clarke attacks "tax cuts brigade"

ANTHONY BEVINS
Political Editor

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, rocked the Tory boat again yesterday with an attack on his party's right-wing "tax cuts at any cost brigade".

Having been urged by the Prime Minister to help keep the party on an "even keel", Mr Clarke moved on from this week's row over the European single currency to deal with desperate Conservative pressure for pre-election tax cuts in the November Budget.

He said in an interview with the *London Evening Standard* that the current spending round was "proving quite difficult", and he warned: "I propose to do nothing in this Budget that might run the risk of having to be reversed after the election."

More significantly, however, Mr Clarke specifically tried to nail suggestions that he was planning to whip up a pre-election spending spree - the boom-bust policy that John Major says will not be repeated. "Tax cuts can only happen if they are in the interests of the economy," Mr Clarke said.

As the tax cut "brigade", are by and large recruits from the same part of the Conservative Party as the Eurosceptics, Mr Clarke is clearly unconcerned by their sensitivities in the run-up to next month's Bournemouth party conference.

Meanwhile the Prime Minister yesterday said that he had no interest in closing the single currency option, because that would push him out of the negotiations. Mr Major was speaking after a breakfast meeting with businessmen in Newbury, Berkshire.

Under arrest
a kite, a
merlin,
a
goshawk and
peregrine. Page 7

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news

A My kingdom
for a
concrete
sculpture ...

A life-sized sculpture of Richard III has been unveiled at Middleham Castle in North Yorkshire, where the 15th-century king was sent as a young boy to be trained as a knight. Writes Charlie Bain.

It was there that he raised an army for his struggle against the Lancastrians during the Wars of the Roses. He later returned to the castle after marrying his only wife, Anne Neville, to rule the North of England on behalf of his brother Edward IV.

The concrete sculpture, commissioned by English Heritage and sculpted by Ripon-based artist Linda Thompson, was positioned permanently in front of the Great Keep at the 800-year-old fortress.

Determining what the King looked like was difficult as many portraits showed profiles. Some were clearly the work of propagandists with the alleged hunch back varying in size commensurate with his presumed evil.



Return of the king: A sculpture of Richard III at Middleham Castle, North Yorkshire, where he trained as a knight

Photograph: John Angerson

CHRIS BLACKHURST
Westminster Correspondent

New cash fears over Greenwich exhibition

British Gas is understood to be reluctant to offer any commitment to provide funding buildings, arguing the exhibition site will revert to its control.

"It's a difficult commercial negotiation to ensure everyone gets the best out of it," said a project insider. "Everyone is negotiating very hard."

Those in charge of forming an operating company to run the exhibition are said to be frustrated at the lack of progress.

Concern is rising that the final bill could soar, to as much as £1bn. The commission has already received one warning from Imagination, the exhibition's designers, that the bill could climb to £800m. The claim, made in a leaked letter from Gary Withers, the head of Imagination, was dismissed within the commission as a softening-up exercise, to extract more cash. Others, though, said that Mr Withers' prognosis was accurate and may, if anything, be on the conservative side. Any lengthy delays, they said, could push his predicted total even higher. Cleaning-up the site is also proving more difficult than originally supposed.

One of those closely involved in planning the celebration said it was time for Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, who has made the event something of a personal crusade, to knock heads together and take firm charge.

British Gas denied any slippage was their fault. "We are continuing our discussions, we are exploring lots of options and we are being as flexible as we can be," said a company spokesman.

Rare Red Kite seized as police raid breeders



A peregrine falcon: Easy prey for illegal breeders

Police have seized a rare Red Kite and other birds of prey in raids on suspected illegal breeders in different parts of Britain. Ten police forces as well as wildlife experts and veterinary surgeons were involved in an operation codenamed "Folkestone".

Blood samples taken from birds as far afield as Sussex and the north of England were yesterday being analysed to see if they were lawfully captive or illegally taken from the wild.

Genetic DNA "fingerprinting" techniques were being used by experts at Nottingham University to find evidence of the birds' parentage.

All the species involved, peregrine, merlin, goshawk and Red Kite are specially protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. Police are believed to have been tracking a network of rare bird dealers for several months.

The Red Kite was one of three rare birds found at an address in Mid Glamorgan where trapping equipment and a rifle were also recovered.

A 47-year-old man was arrested and later released on bail pending further inquiries.

Several hawks were also found at the home of another breeder in West Glamorgan

where a 39-year-old man was arrested.

Det Sgt Ian Gifford, South Wales police wildlife liaison officer, who co-ordinated the operation, said: "Birds of prey are subject to considerable illegal persecution. It is important that we send out a strong message to those involved that we will take steps to tackle these unusual crimes."

Roger Lovegrove, Wales regional officer for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, said: "We are delighted that the police are taking these types of offences seriously. The continuing persecution of birds of prey is of great concern to the public and ourselves."

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Will Neil's disclosure lay Rupert bare?

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Media Correspondent

Andrew Neil is to lift the lid on his often stormy relationship with media tycoon Rupert Murdoch, owner of the *Sunday Times*, in a provocative book to be published next month.

Full Disclosure is based on details of conversations, telephone calls and stories which Neil noted in a series of notebooks following his appointment to the editorship of the Sunday broadsheet in 1983.

It also spills the beans on his four-month affair with Pamela Bordes, whom he subsequently discovered to be a call girl. He successfully sued the *Sunday Telegraph* for suggesting in a leader that he was unfit to be editor because of the relationship.

Neil is reticent about revealing details about his portrait of Murdoch, but says it is likely to annoy a number of people.

During his 11 years on the paper Neil took on the unions over Wapping, the Government over *Spycatcher*, the Royal Family over Andrew Morton's book on the Princess of Wales and med-



Two faces of Neil: As editor (left) in his *Sunday Times* office, and as partygoer, with his friend Pamela Bordes

ical orthodoxy over AIDS. He inspired awe and fear in his staff, who were often terrified of his moods.

However, he also revolutionised the paper by taking it into the middle market and overseeing its hugely successful expansion into several sections.

Neil finally broke his long association with Murdoch – in 1994 after the cancellation of the prime-time show on Fox Television which he had left Britain for Los Angeles to present.

sacked shortly after he started as editor — and recounts his shock at arriving at the newspaper in 1983 to find that office chairs and typewriters were chained down to stop them being stolen.

Yesterday Neil said: "I used to keep notebooks, not a diary in the sense that every day I would write something. By the end I had 22 of them."

"I kept notes of all important conversations. Everybody knew I kept a notebook with me. It was a pretty verbatim record."

Neil added that he also kept "crucial" memos and letters from journalists, although he did not say whether they included the notorious letter from one correspondent who provoked his own departure by reportedly accusing Neil of being both a bully and a coward.

Although devoted to the *Sunday Times* years, *Full Disclosure* also deals with Neil's upbringing – in a Paisley council house in a staunch Tory household – followed by a stint at Glasgow University, as the first member of his family to gain a degree.



Eastern promise: *Yusuf Being Sold in the Marketplace* (left) and *Khusrau Spies Shirin Bathing* – Persian oils from around 1240 – are expected to fetch between £15,000 and £30,000 each at Sotheby's Oriental Manuscripts sale in London on 16 October



One does not usually think of film studios as trying to kill off their actors, but Sir Alec Guinness seems to be an exception. In *My Name Escapes Me: The Diary of a Retiring Actor*, published by Hamish Hamilton on Thursday, he reveals a hair-raising escape from death while making *The Lavender Hill Mob* in 1951.

In the Ealing comedy co-starring Stanley Holloway, Guinness played a bank clerk involved in a nefarious plot to smuggle gold out of England by melting it into models of the Eiffel Tower. He notes:



Mob handed: Sir Alec (left) with Stanley Holloway

"Ealing Studios never succeeded in killing me in spite of some quite good tries, the first of which was during the making of *Lavender Hill*. Rehearsing a brief scene in which Stanley and I were required to escape from the top of the Eiffel Tower, the director said: 'Alec, there is a trap door over there – where it says Workmen Only – I'd like you to run to it, open it and start running down the spiral staircase. Stanley will follow.'

Guinness duly did as he was told and raced dizzyly down the steps only to screech to a halt on realising that the steps had broken off halfway down. "I sat down promptly where I was and cautiously started to shift myself back to the top, warning Stanley to get out of the way.

"What the hell are you doing?" the director yelled.

"Down! Further down! Further down is eternity," I called back."

In a unique appointment, the London Mozart Players has appointed the Northern Irish poet Martin Mooney to be writer in association for the orchestra. It is thought to be the first time that a British orchestra has worked with a writer in such a way, rather than appointing a composer.

Mooney, 32, is the author of *Grub*, a full-length collection of poems which won the Brendan Behan Memorial Award, and a short play, *Baltic Exchange*. He joins the LMP for two years from next Tuesday and will be devising full evening

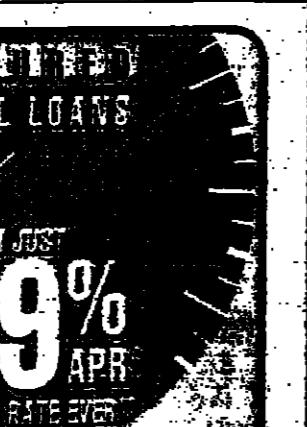
programmes for festivals and concert series combining his own writing and other texts with music.

One of his projects will be to write the text for a children's piece aimed at five- to nine-year-olds, but his general brief is to break the mould of the traditional concert format.

Peter Godwin this week won the 1996 Esquire/Apple/Waterstone's non-fiction award for *Mukawa*, an account of his surreal upbringing in Rhodesia, among witch doctors and leopard-hunting, not to mention civil war and tribal atrocities. The BBC documentary maker was awarded £10,000 and £5,000 of computer equipment.

Previous winners include *The Railway Man* by Eric Lomax, *In Pharaoh's Army* by Tobias Wolff and *When Did You Last See Your Father?* by Blake Morrison.

MARIANNE MACDONALD



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ISRAEL ON THE BRINK

Fatah leader warns world to expect

'Now we have thousands of guns, the fighting will go on'

PATRICK COCKBURN

Ramallah:

Israel can expect a wave of suicide bomb attacks in revenge for the deaths of some 50 Palestinians at the hands of the Israeli army and police this week, predicts Marwan Barghouti, a senior lieutenant of Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader.

He added that he believed "the

Wet lashes will continue in all districts for a week".

Mr Barghouti, the general secretary of Fatah, the largest Palestinian political movement in the West Bank, told *The Independent*: "You can expect in the next few weeks a wave of suicide bombs in Israel."

He said it was almost im-

possible that Hamas, whose

suicide bombs killed 58 people in Israel earlier this year, would

carry out more suicide attacks

to put pressure to get the support of

the people by capitalising on

Arab anger.

Mr Barghouti was speaking

recross to the scene of some of the

sharpest fighting between Israeli

troops and Palestinian police on

Wednesday. As he explained why

he thought the violence was going

to get worse, several hun-

dred Palestinian young men, about 100 yards away, were trying to storm a house held by Israeli soldiers by hurling Molotov cocktails. The troops replied with rubber bullets. At one moment, part of the hillside caught fire, sending up plumes of smoke.

Protected by a wall from the rubber bullets which crashed through the windows of an office block overhead, Mr Barghouti said he thought the closure by Israel of the tunnel running under the Muslim quarter in Jerusalem would no longer be enough to end the armed clashes. He said: "The Israeli government will have to implement the peace process by pulling out of Hebron, continuing the redeployment of its troops on the West Bank and releasing our prisoners."

Mr Barghouti said the instructions to Fatah activists were to continue the demonstration.

Asked if it was possible that Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, would order his army to take over Ramallah or the other autonomous Palestinian towns, Mr Barghouti said the whole sit-

uation in the West Bank and Gaza had changed since 1994: "When the Israelis left we had hundreds of weapons. Now we have thousands."

Even if the Israelis had tanks and helicopters they would suffer serious losses, something unlikely to happen because of the deaths of 13 soldiers this week, he said. As Mr Barghouti spoke, the bizarre position of the Palestinian police in Ramallah was emphasised when they tried to stop the young men from attacking the Israeli-occupied area.

The police had themselves been fighting the Israelis at the very spot the previous day – the back window of a blue police van had the picture of a policeman who was killed, with the heading "a martyr in the battle of Jerusalem" over it – and the rioters did not welcome their intervention. They turned on the Palestinian riot police, equipped with see-through plastic shields and hurled volleys of stones, forcing them to retreat. In one sense, both sides were within their rights. The Palestinian rioters, hurling stones and mineral water bottles filled with smoke, were holding a hill which is autonomous Ramallah.

David Grossman, page 15



Prayer call: Shoes left outside the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem where three died yesterday. Photograph: Reuters

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a wave of retaliation suicide attacks

Ancient tunnel that became focus of Palestinian fears

ERIC SILVER
Jerusalem

The 500-yard tunnel in Jerusalem that sparked this week's Israeli-Palestinian bloodshed is long, dark, damp and ecumenical. It begins at the prayer plaza of the Jewish Wailing Wall, runs under the Muslim Quarter of the Old City and emerges through a contentious gate opposite the Second Station of the Cross on the Christian Via Dolorosa - the site, Messrs Benjamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat might care to note, of the Flagellation and Condemnation.

Its stones are no more holy, to any of the city's three religions than many others here. For most of its length, you walk

alongside a buried extension of the Wailing Wall, the massive retaining wall King Herod built to hold up the platform for his splendid temple. But it has no more, or less, sanctity for the Jews than the exposed Wailing Wall. There is no tradition - yet - of praying against it, though at one point a perennial spring seeps down the wall. "That is the wall waiting," the guide can't resist quipping.

At no stage does the tunnel penetrate the wall to cut under what the Jews revere as the Temple Mount and the Muslims cherish as the Haram al Sharif, the "Noble Sanctuary" from which the Prophet Mohammed miraculously ascended to heaven. Al Aqsa mosque, the third most holy in Islam, stands at the

southern end of the mount, but the gate opened last Monday night is 400 yards away from it. The only Muslim constructions are arches and vaults raised here by the Mamluk conquerors of Jerusalem 12 centuries after Herod, some of which were first uncovered by British army engineers in the late 19th century. They have no religious resonances, but are reminders of a glorious Arab past.

There is also a stretch of a 2,000-year-old paved road, on which Jesus may, or may not, have trodden. But that, too, is not unique. You can walk on similar stones in the open air to the south of the Wailing Wall in an archaeological park.

Most of this has been open to the public for the best part of

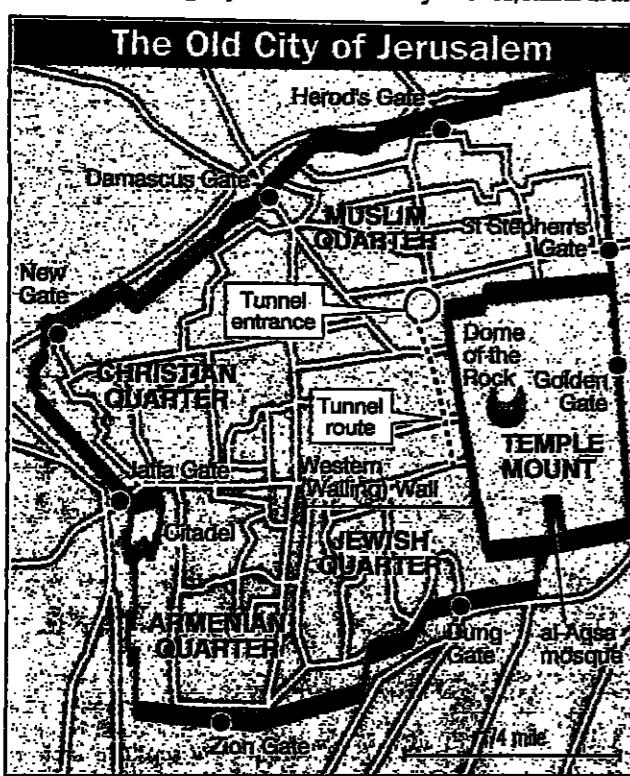
a decade. Excavation ended in 1985. But a new stretch has now been opened through a tunnel the Hasmonean kings used to pipe water from a reservoir into the city 2,200 years ago.

The only real change last Monday night was that an exit gate was cut at the northern end of the Hasmonean tunnel so that visitors can go in one end and come out the other.

The previous Labour government had refrained from opening it for fear of provoking Muslim violence, which has more to do with national aspirations in the disputed holy city than theology. The Jews were pre-empting the final-status negotiations the Palestinians still hope will bring them in a capital in East Jerusalem. The rest is mayhem.



Photograph: AP



Netanyahu blames Arafat for carnage

ERIC SILVER
Jerusalem

The Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, yesterday roundly condemned Yasser Arafat for this week's escalation of violence and the shadow it has cast over the peace process.

He accused the Palestinian leader of "a cynical attempt to manipulate a non-issue, a fabrication which says that we in any way, hurt Islamic holy places" by opening an archaeological tunnel in the Old City of Jerusalem. "The tunnel does not do this in any way, and the chairman of the Palestinian Authority knew exactly that."

Speaking to reporters in his Jerusalem office after a cabinet meeting, Mr Netanyahu blamed Mr Arafat for exploiting a religious issue, and the attendant fanaticism, "as a deliberate act of inciting the riots."

He charged the Palestinians with a triple violation of the Oslo peace agreements. "The first is the incitement, banned by Oslo. The second is the violence, banned by Oslo. And the third is the abrogation of the responsibility of keeping law and order, also stipulated by Oslo."

To get the peace negotiations back on course, Mr Netanyahu urged Mr Arafat to "give clear instructions to his security forces to cease and desist from these violent attacks. He has to start keeping order against terrorists and not firing weapons against Israeli soldiers. He must personally intervene to stop the incitement."

The Israeli Prime Minister offered no sweeteners in return, but appeared eager to get back to the negotiating table. "I am prepared to meet Mr Arafat. Our hand is stretched out in peace, and we expect a similar attitude from the Palestinian Authority."

At the same time, the Prime Minister insisted on Israel's right to self-defence.

"We have instructed our military forces to take the necessary precautions to prevent such violent attacks on our soldiers. We don't want to use more force than we have to."

Mr Netanyahu accused the Palestinians of lying about damage to the mosque area. Muslims claim that tunnel runs underneath the al-Aqsa compound, but archaeologists say it runs alongside it.

He refused to reconsider his decision to open an exit from the contentious tunnel. The site was closed yesterday, but the National Security Minister, Avigdor Kahalani, said that it would reopen soon and would remain open "every day and every holiday".

Speaking to reporters in his Jerusalem office after a cabinet meeting, Mr Netanyahu blamed Mr Arafat for exploiting a religious issue, and the attendant fanaticism, "as a deliberate act of inciting the riots."

He charged the Palestinians with a triple violation of the Oslo peace agreements. "The first is the incitement, banned by Oslo. The second is the violence, banned by Oslo. And the third is the abrogation of the responsibility of keeping law and order, also stipulated by Oslo."

To get the peace negotiations back on course, Mr Netanyahu urged Mr Arafat to "give clear instructions to his security forces to cease and desist from these violent attacks. He has to start keeping order against terrorists and not firing weapons against Israeli soldiers. He must personally intervene to stop the incitement."

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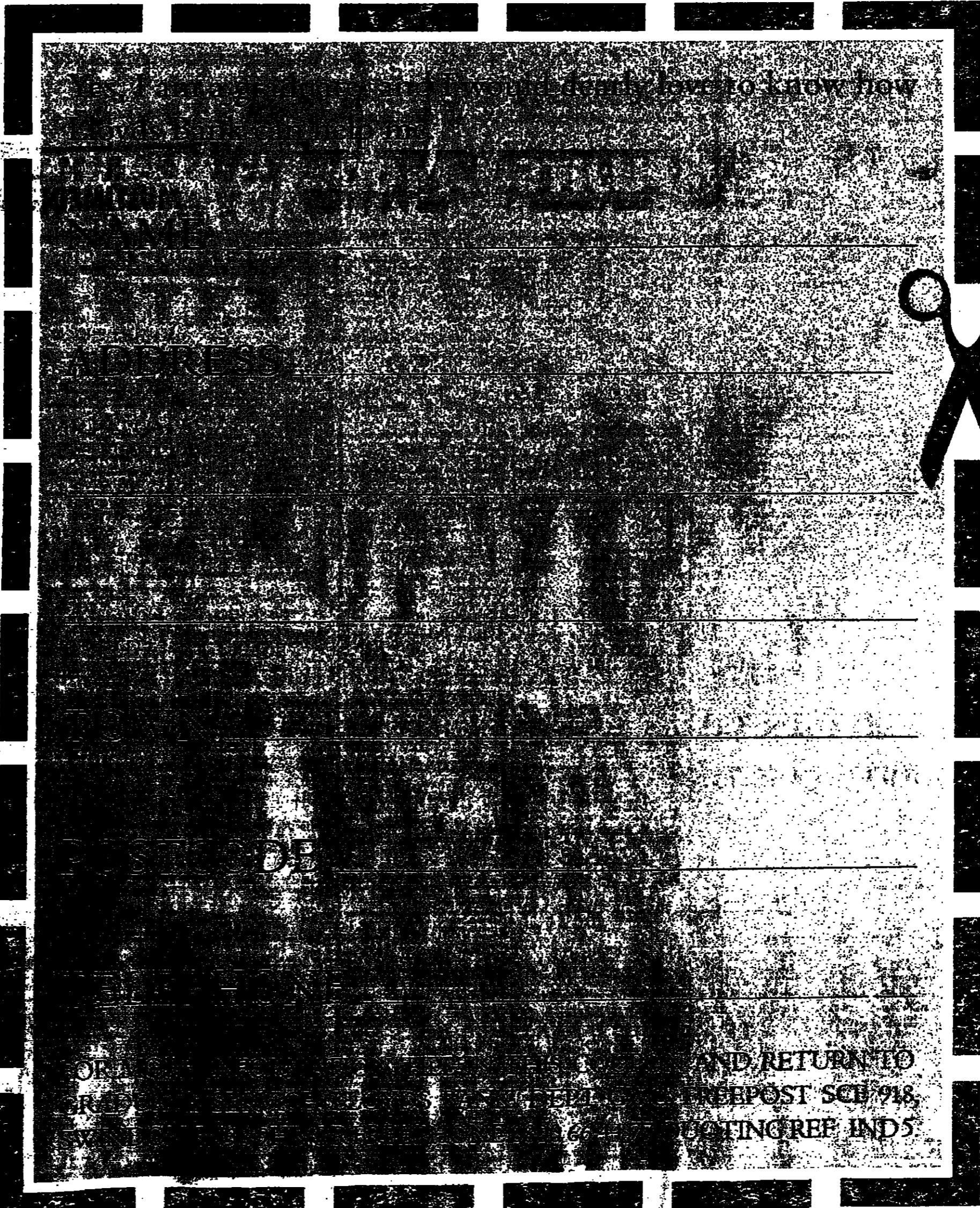
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International

A Kabul falls to the tide of the Taliban

Raymond Whitaker reports as a nation steps back in time

abul has fallen: it sounds like 19th-century dispatch to the India Office in London. The news that Afghanistan is outside the modern world, that it operates by the rules of adventure fiction, will simply be reinforced by the conquering campaign of the Taliban militia and its mysterious one-eyed leader, Mullah Muhammad Omar.

Nor will this image be dismally his first act – executing Afghanistan's former communist leader, Najibullah, and stringing up his body on a traffic kiosk outside the presidential palace.

Najibullah (who, like many Afghans, used only one name) took refuge in a United Nations compound when his regime collapsed in April 1992, but no vestige of the organisation's authority could save him from the medieval revenge of Kabul's new masters.

The romance of Afghanistan

– its remoteness, its reluctance to abandon tradition, its elaborate and savage enforced honour – is also the nation's tragedy.

Trans-Najibullah was merely the latest of a series of would-be modernisers who tried to force change on the country, and his whose efforts did nothing but set him further back. Not only did he fail to impose an alien ideology, he relied on foreign invaders to install and maintain him in power, uniting Afghans against him.

But as many had foreseen, his conservative mujahedin group

The day time ran out for Najibullah

TIM McGIRK
inc, New Delhi

From his shelter inside the UN compound in Kabul, the late Afghan president, Najibullah, could hear a 400 executioners coming closer. Every rocket and artillery barrage that fell during the Taliban militia's conquest of Kabul overnight yesterday was like the footsteps of an approaching hangman.

At 3am, Najibullah, the last Communist ruler of Afghanistan, realised the guards outside his sanctuary had deserted their posts. He radioed frantically to another UN building for help. Radio silence was his only reply. Soon after, fighters of the Islamic militia known as Taliban burst into the compound where Najibullah had lived as a virtual prisoner for the past four-and-a-half years.

Najibullah, 49, was dragged out, beaten, shot dead, and hung from a traffic kiosk near the palace where for six years he presided over the killing and torture of thousands of Afghans opposed to his Marxist regime.

His murder by the Taliban militia, who now control Kabul and almost all of the country, brings the last chapter of the 1979 Soviet invasion to a grisly end. Groomed by the Kremlin, Najibullah was put in charge of security during the pro-Soviet rule of Babrak Karmal, who was replaced in 1986 by Najibullah.

Nicknamed "the Ox" because of his wrestler's build, Najibullah survived in power by discarding hard-line Communists

Obituary, page 16

Militia on mission to enforce peace

The Taliban militia, which conquered Kabul yesterday and now controls most of Afghanistan, began as a movement of former Islamic seminary students who vowed to bring the country's feuding warlords to heel, writes Tim McGirk. But their sweep of Kabul is unlikely to bring instant peace to this war-ravaged country.

Armed with tanks, rocket-launchers and warplanes, as well as the Koran, the Taliban over the past 18 months have succeeded in capturing such key Afghan towns as Kandahar, Herat, Jalalabad and now Kabul, with astonishing speed and relatively few casualties. Many Afghans, devastated by years of war, welcomed the Taliban as a movement which would at last restore peace.

As the Taliban entered Kabul yesterday, jubilant crowds greeted them. Run by a council of clergymen based in the southern city of Kandahar, the Taliban enforce a strict vision of Islam. In areas under their control, they have closed girls' schools, banned women from

who took over Kabul after his downfall soon fell out among themselves. Under Communism the capital retained many relics of its past, but four years later the Taliban is marching into a city which has suffered

adopted the all-enveloping *burqa*. Despite previous threats, Najibullah remained alive in his UN compound, and foreigners were even able to obtain alcohol, as long as they were discreet.

Now the Taliban seems intent on returning the capital to the Middle Ages. But Afghanistan is sick of war, and the movement's zealots have brought order where the mujahedin were often little more than bandits. Any attempt to retake Kabul by the former government would probably require help from Abdul Rashid Dostam, the Uzbek warlord who has established a virtually independent state north of the Hindu Kush, the world's second highest mountain range, which divides Afghanistan.

Mr Dostam is seeking to

build up trade and develop oil

and gas reserves, however, and

may have little inclination to

take on the Taliban and its pre-

sumed support in Pakistan.

Afghanistan has long been frag-

mented; now it may undergo

partition in all but name.

Does any of this matter in the

real world? It does, and not only

because all the factions are

fighting with the billions of dol-

lars' worth of arms and munitions

pumped into Afghanistan when

it was a Cold War cockpit.

The country's instability

enabled proxy growers and re-

finers to flourish, making it the

world's biggest exporter of opium

and heroin. This is something the Taliban, for all its

austerity, has done nothing to

obstruct.

Mr Dostam is likely to do



The road to Kabul: A jeep narrowly escapes a mortar round fired by the attacking Taliban militia, outside the Afghan capital

Photograph: AFP

anything but encourage the many camps which already exist to train Islamic militants from many countries.

"When we have conquered Afghanistan, we will conquer the whole world for Islam," one of its members recently boasted, and intelligence officials who have monitored Afghan links to conflicts in Bosnia, Kashmir, Algeria and Chechnya, as well as events such as the World Trade Center bombing in New York, know these are not idle words.

But the Taliban's adherents are no more the natural rulers of Afghanistan than their predecessors were – in many ways their brand of Islam is as for-

ign to the country as was Communism. Like those who have held Kabul before him, Mullah Omar might find it hard to control the unruly provinces. If he fails, it could one day be his turn to flee or face execution.

However brutally and misguidedly, Najibullah was trying to drag his nation into the 20th century, and in his time women did not fear to wear jeans and make-up on the streets of Kabul. The mujahedin takeover forced them to cover their heads, but only the poorer and more rural visitors to the city

were devastated than Sarajevo. The mosques and palaces celebrated in classical poetry have been obliterated, even the ancient fortress looming over the city, the Bala Hissar, has gone.

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Sick system at heart of Italy's hospital chaos

ANDREW GUMBEL

Rome

When the Italian Health Minister, Rosy Bindi, visited the Cotugno hospital in Naples yesterday, she found the place swarming with police. It was not just her security that they were looking out for; they had been mobilised by the government to bring a semblance of order to a hospital where drugs are openly traded in the wards and addicts regularly threaten the staff with used syringes stained with their HIV-infected blood.

The Cotugno, which specialises in infectious diseases, is the only public institution in southern Italy which accepts Aids patients, but over the past two years it has become a byword for mayhem and the deep malaise at the heart of the Italian health system. The crisis reached its peak four days ago, when an Aids patient died of a heroin overdose and two others were whisked into intensive care. They, too, had bought the drugs on the premises.

The police were ordered in by the local government prefect, Achille Catalani, on the advice

of the health and interior ministries. "We don't intend to turn the place into a military camp," Mr Catalani said. "But there will be at least two law officers on site at all times to ensure full surveillance around the clock."

The Cotugno was originally intended to be part of a new wave of health care in the Naples region, a clean, efficient hospital providing well-administered specialist care – in stark contrast to the main general hospital, the Cardarelli, where rats have run the wards, bodies mysteriously disappear from the morgue, and patients have been known to die because the operating theatre ran out of stitching thread.

Only last week, a 15-year-old boy infected with botulism from a rogue tub of mascarpone cheese died at the Cardarelli because the authorities had forgotten to check supplies and were unable to treat him.

Unfortunately, the Cotugno has never lived up to its hopes of being significantly different, and its Aids wards have rapidly run out of control, partly because the patients are nearly all drug addicts with violent, if

not criminal, tendencies, and partly because the numbers have become too big to handle.

In March last year, Aids patients rebelled against their conditions by flinging furniture and food out of the windows. They were reprovided with new beds and television sets, but the improvements turned out to be little more than window dressing. Two new Aids wards have been opened since, but without the resources to provide even a minimum level of civilised care.

A week ago, a doctor almost died when a patient set fire to a mattress and tossed it into his office. Nurses complain that they are attacked with blood-stained needles. It has been an open secret that drugs pushers do the rounds of the wards during visiting hours. But this is also a city where many hospital ordinaries are ex-convicts helped into public-sector jobs by the local Mafia, which in turn controls the drugs trade.

Staff have little faith that the police presence will change much. "It will last two weeks," predicted one nurse. "Then, when the media fuss has died down, it will be hell all over again."



Sheer history: Workers are mirrored in a Hong Kong tower as they work on the building where the handover to China will take place on 1 July next year

Prodi fights to reduce budget deficit

Rome — The Italian government was last night putting together the most austere budget package in the country's post-war history in a last-ditch attempt to qualify for European monetary union on time, writes Andrew Gambel.

Romano Prodi, the Prime Minister, went into a cabinet meeting at 11am armed with a provisional agreement among the governing parties to cut the budget by 50 trillion lire (£20bn) in 1997 — already well above the 32.5 trillion that his predecessor, Lamberto Dini shaved off the 1996 budget. But as the day went on and the meeting showed no sign of coming to an end, government sources were talking of a £2.5 trillion cut — all in the name of bringing the budget deficit down to the 3 per cent of gross domestic product stipulated by the Maastricht treaty by the end of next year.

Roughly 38 trillion was expected to come from a combination of cuts in expenditure and tax rises, another 12 trillion from a one-off "Europe tax" and a further 12 trillion from unspecified treasury operations. It was far from clear, however, how this ambitious plan would go down either in parliament or in the country, and there were the first signs yesterday of potentially dangerous disgruntlement.

To get his budget through, Mr Prodi needs the support of a broad swathe of parties from the liberal centre led by Mr Dini to the far-left Rifondazione Communista, which is not part of the government but whose votes are crucial to give the government

a majority in the Chamber of Deputies. On Thursday the leader of Rifondazione Comunista, Fausto Bertinotti, won a commitment that the new budget would not touch state pensions or increase charges made to the public for health care.

But that deal caused considerable dismay on the right wing



Prodi: Has said this will be last austerity budget

of the government coalition. Diego Massi, the floor leader of Mr Dini's party Rinnovo Italiano, said the package was over-reliant on tax increases, and tendered his resignation.

Polls show that the one-off Europe tax is unpopular with the electorate since Italy already has one of the highest tax thresholds in Europe. The continuing belt-tightening plays into the hands of fringe political groups including the Northern League, which has made mileage out of the resentment northern voters feel at having to bail out the less affluent centre and south.

significant shorts

Rifkind attacks US over UN chief

The Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, openly criticised the United States for triggering the controversy over the future leadership of the UN by making a public issue of its decision to block Boutros Boutros-Ghali from being elected to a second term as Secretary-General. "It would have been better for a sensitive issue like this to have been privately handled," Mr Rifkind said, chastising the US for indulging in "megaphone diplomacy". While saying that Britain would ultimately defend Mr Boutros-Ghali, Mr Rifkind noted that the Secretary-General has been "very sensitive to the needs of the member states," as the UN's figurehead, and that he deserves "the proper consideration". David Osborne - New York

Rwanda massacre trial postponed

An international tribunal delayed for a month the first trial in the genocide of hundreds of thousands of people in Rwanda. The presiding judge, Yakov Arkadievich Ostrowsky, said Jean-Paul Akayesu, a former village mayor, will go on trial on 31 October on charges of genocide, murder and torture. Mr Akayesu has pleaded innocent to charges of ordering and helping to kill 2,000 people in his village, Tabu. The trial of Mr Akayesu, a Hutu, will be the first in connection with 90 days of state-sponsored massacres in which more than 500,000 Rwandans, mostly minority Tutsis and politically moderate Hutus, were killed. AP - Arusha, Tanzania

Door to Nato stays closed

The US Defense Secretary, William Perry, said that the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were not ready for membership of Nato, but suggested they could one day be part of the Western alliance. "I think they are not yet ready for membership, but the emphasis is on 'not yet,'" he said, in response to questions on the planned first round of Nato enlargement next year, despite opposition by Russia. Mr Perry spoke after a two-day meeting of Nato defence ministers in Bergen on Wednesday and Thursday to discuss Bosnia, Nato enlargement and relations with Russia. Reuter - Bergen

Evidence aids Palme case

A prosecutor in the Olof Palme murder investigation said the latest allegations of South African involvement could advance efforts to solve the 1986 killing. Swedish investigators already studied the possible South African connection a year after Palme was gunned down in Stockholm. "Now there is a flesh-and-blood person whose name we have, sitting in custody and talking about this," deputy prosecutor Solveig Kibberdal said. In South Africa, authorities announced they would investigate claims by state assassin Eugene de Kock that apartheid-era security services were involved in Palme's murder. Johannesburg - Mary Brail

Burma blocks congress

Burmese police detained pro-democracy politicians and blocked all roads leading to democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi's house to stop a congress of her party taking place, a government official said. The Nobel Peace laureate had not been arrested. The official said the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (Slor) had decided to prevent Ms Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) from holding a meeting because it did not have permission for the gathering. "The reason for preventing the meeting from taking place is because they invited more than 200 representatives, and a congress of this size needs prior consent of the authorities". Reuter - Rangoon

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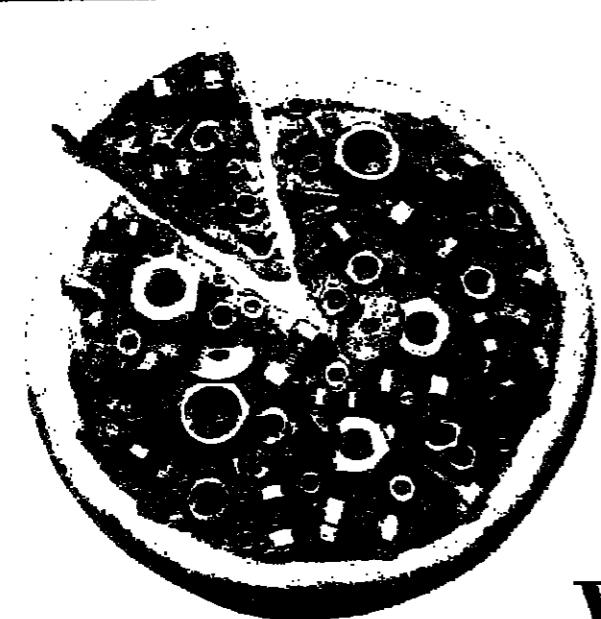
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Star gazing: Astronomers in Corvallis, Oregon, United States, studying Jupiter at the start of the lunar eclipse on Thursday night. Photograph: AP



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Japanese unmoved by election games

LDP set to reassert its sterile grip on power as hopes of new era fade

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
Tokyo

Following Japanese politics is a bit like watching an obscure foreign sport - sumo wrestling say, or Australian Rules Football. On first viewing, it is incomprehensible but after a few sessions, patterns emerge and rules come into focus. Over time you recognise key players and find a team to support and fellow aficionados who share your enthusiasm. But to most of the people you meet in the real world, your hobby has no interest whatsoever.

So it is in Tokyo at the moment. Yesterday, the Prime Minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, made what should have been an announcement of great significance. The Diet (parliament) of Japan, which is economically the second most powerful country in the world, was dissolved in preparation for a general election which will almost certainly take place on 20 October.

Politicians and journalists have been scrutinising the tea leaves for weeks in anticipation of the announcement. But in the real world, it caused little stir. For the elections will be a game played among Japanese politicians, of minimal interest to their own people, and with no significant bearing on the problems confronting the country, or to its relations with the rest of the world.

The next Prime Minister, assuming it is not Mr Hashimoto, will be Japan's fifth in three-and-a-half years. During the same period, Japan has faced a major earthquake and terrorist attack, seen huge anti-American demonstrations in Okinawa, and made a slow economic recovery. If this suggests instability, however, it is misleading. Japan's political culture has remained closed, monolithic and unresponsive.

It was not meant to be this way. After the last election, in July 1993, Japan appeared to be entering a new era. The Liberal Democratic Party, in power since 1955, lost its majority after reform-minded defectors formed a cluster of new parties.

The coalition which they formed promised to reform the electoral system, open up the economy, and break the bureaucrats' grip on power. The

first goal was narrowly achieved, but the coalition quickly fell apart, to be eventually replaced by a bizarre alliance between the LDP and its former foes, the Socialists.

Before Mr Hashimoto, the coalition was lead by the feeble Tomiochi Murayama, a lifelong Socialist and, until his absorption into the unlikely alliance, a pacifist. Apart from certain differences in style, the two prime ministers pursued similar policies on security (close ties with the United States), economics (a nominal "liberalisation" of markets), and the bureaucracy (reform, but not yet). In fact, it would be hard to find any politician who would not support these vague aims.

The interest in the election is not policy debate but a few



Ryutaro Hashimoto: Part of the well-oiled election machine

strong personalities, and the parties gathering around them in the hope of achieving power.

The LDP has a well-oiled election machine and in Mr Hashimoto a leader who is impressive in public and reassuring to his backbenchers.

Credible opposition is divided between Shinshinto (New Frontier Party), the second biggest party, and Minshuto, which will be formally inaugurated today.

Tension among the politicians has been generated by the new voting system, which combines a first-past-the-post system with proportional representation.

The outcome of the elections is likely to be another coalition between the LDP and either Minshuto or Shinshinto. But, apart from the participants, it will be difficult to find anyone who really cares.

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Can Israel's playboy pass the maturity test?

Bloody reality has caught up with Israel's political playboy. Much hangs this week end on Benjamin Netanyahu's capacity to grow up. He must act to end to the murderous skirmishing of the past few days. The security of the nation of Israel depends on starting what must come to be – the establishment of some enduring relationship with the Palestinian leadership. It does not have to be warm, nor photogenic. But it does require concession and compromise, by an Israeli government that seems unable to offer even the tiniest gesture.

On Mr Netanyahu's rapid maturing turns the interim stability of the Middle East. With the calming benefit of distance we have no need to overestimate the importance of recent events. Human disaster that they are, West Bank deaths do little or nothing to upset the geopolitical balance in the region. They may make the survival of moderate regimes in Cairo and Amman marginally less likely but probably do little to affect attitudes and interests of Damascus and Riyadh. American warships still patrol the Persian Gulf. Islamic fundamentalism in Kabul has no need of this fuel to combat.

But this week's fatal mayhem in the streets of Bethlehem, Nablus and East Jerusalem could have been avoided. Even after Mr Netanyahu's May election victory there was nothing inevitable about the welling-up of Palestinian resentment and the loss of author-

ity by Yasser Arafat which is, in part, the cause of this outbreak of armed conflict.

The root cause is that Mr Netanyahu has been hemmed in by the savage hardliners in his right-of-centre coalition cabinet. The saga of the Jerusalem tunnel speaks volumes. Why was it opened now, a decade after it was prepared for tourist use, and immediately after acts of clear provocation? Mr Netanyahu seems, gratuitously, to have wanted to play to only one gallery – the religious extremists who make claim to the entire territory from Tel Aviv to Allenby Bridge. Then to disappear off on a joy ride to Britain and Germany without apparently preparing for what Israeli security services must have reported as an inevitable Palestinian response? Is Mr Netanyahu is really so naive, not to say amateur, in the management of domestic affairs?

The Israeli Prime Minister won the election with the tactic of ignoring the Palestinians.

In spite of the almost pathetic pleading of Arafat to be taken seriously, in spite of the obvious growth in popular anger among the Palestinian population at large, the tactic has remained the same: close your eyes and two million of them would fade into invisibility. Roads could be built, concrete foundations laid and the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza would, magically, part for ever. Like the blank face of the Western Wall, Likud and its allies have presented themselves as stonily immovable on key issues, such as the withdrawal of troops from Hebron as promised



by the Perez government and the expansion of West Bank settlements.

Now that wall has been undermined. The Israeli government can move in one of only two directions. It could reoccupy the autonomous areas, clamping the grip of martial law on to the West Bank and Gaza, and thereby provoking the revival of intifada and the return of the bus bombers. Yasser Arafat goes, either assassinated or banished to the margins of a scene in which Hamas and the ultras take over. In such circumstances Israel's moral credit in the West would fall perilously low. Even jejune British defence secretaries (recall Michael Portillo's effusions during the Israeli assault on southern Lebanon earlier this year) would find it hard to offer support. Israeli politicians behave as if they can get away with murder because, in the case of the United States, they can play the election timetable. But after November even President Clinton will take a dim and distant view of this politically backward behaviour.

The other way forward is to attempt to build, through Arafat, structures of Palestinian power and responsibility – moves that, yes, bring once again into prospect the creation of a Palestinian political entity. In present circumstances a weak Arafat does nothing to benefit the Israeli cause: on the contrary, it strengthens the insurgent drive. If Arafat's condition for talks this weekend is suspension of the tunnel project, it would be a small, small price for the Israelis to pay. Indeed, no real price at all.

The Israeli leadership faces a clear test. Does Mr Netanyahu have what it takes to extract this little concession from the religious hardliners, knowing how much support he could get, if needed, from Labour and the Knesset moderates? If he fails to make the attempt, we can mark him as the merely factional leader of a grouping within a torn and agonised nation, a factional leader who has abandoned all efforts to lead the Israeli nation as a whole. Let him not forget that that nation elected him by the slimmest of margins. Under those circumstances, his role is to create a real majority, and for that there is only one road – the slow and stony road toward peace.

Accommodation has to be reached, sooner or later, with the Palestinians. That must mean movement more or less down the road opened in Oslo with the signing of the peace accords. If Mr Netanyahu has some kind of alternative – he claims to be a free enterprise liberal who may have thoughts about emancipation of the Palestinians by economic growth – then let us hear it. He owes even the most dogmatic of his fellow Israelis, let alone the pragmatic majority, some picture of just how they are going to live with their Palestinian neighbours in years to come. The only alternative is recurrent anarchy, the constant presence of regional danger – and then death – day after bloody day, more unnecessary Middle Eastern dead. No one wants it. What the world wants is for Israel to understand that.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Workfare looks unworkable to the Kentish 'chain gang'

Sir: Your report on workfare (26 September) highlights the fact that pilot studies on forcing the unemployed to work for their benefits are taking place in Hull and north Kent.

Evidence so far from the pilot areas suggests that the Tories will have much more trouble in implementing US-style workfare than they think. In both areas, the scheme – officially titled Project Work but dubbed "the Chain Gang" by many of its participants – is not only unfair, but also impossible to operate.

Hull City, Rochester City and Kent County councils have all boycotted any work connected with the scheme. The voluntary sector has also been unwilling to participate because the work is forced.

Some of the placements that have been found are in areas that were previously done by people on community service orders, placing both the jobs of probation-related staff and alternatives to custody at risk.

Ironically, one of the first

organisations in Kent to take people on the scheme was a local Napoleonic fort, partly built by French prisoners of war.

If "Conservative strategists" are "hopeful that [the] pilots ... will highlight the positive aspects of the scheme", they are either being told fibs by civil servants on the ground or are deliberately ignoring the evidence from Kent and Hull.

Workfare is unworkable.
MARTIN COCK
Vice-Chair, Medway Towns Trades Union Council
Rochester, Kent

Sir: Your report and leading article about workfare raised some key issues, but did not give more than a nod towards the charity sector organisations who are likely to be asked to deliver a substantial proportion of any new scheme.

The Wildlife Trusts have 15 years' experience of hosting a succession of employment and training programmes from the community programme in the early Eighties to the more recent Community Action.

Menial forced labour is not attractive to anyone. Worthwhile work benefiting local communities and the people carrying it out is attractive to everyone.

PETER R SHIRLEY
Director, Community Affairs,
The Wildlife Trusts
Lincoln

Sir: The question is *cui bono*? Certainly not the unemployed, dragged into bonded labour, to work at jobs that a few years ago

merited a living wage; not the employed, who with the threat of the *carcere* hanging over them will work for lower and lower wages for longer and longer hours. *Cui bono* from workfare? Corporate profits.

The greatest success of the Tories in the past 17 years has been to repackage political debate, from how we are to make a fair, just, democratic society into how can we have an efficient, profitable economy, while sidestepping the question of efficient and profitable for whom.

LEONIE RUTHERFORD

London NW10

Sir: So the Government is considering a range of "workfare" options (report, 26 September), the "most radical of which is encouraging employers to give work with training to young unemployed people. They would be paid by the employer and have their benefit stopped."

And I thought that was a job. Then again, I suppose for the Tories that is radical.

KATE BETTS
Richmond, North Yorkshire

Audience makes the play at the Globe

Sir: Whether it was director Jack Shepherd or actor-manager Mark Rylance who decided to stage *Two Gentlemen of Verona* in modern dress at the Globe this summer I do not know. It was a masterstroke. The actors were dressed in the same style and period as the most important element of any theatre's architecture: the audience.

"Let's forget the building" wrote Victoria McKee (24 September) before taking up a familiar literary standpoint, when no theatre demands a holistic approach for theatrical criticism more than does the Globe.

The oldest extant illustrations of an audience assisting at the playing of a scene we all recognise is the 1777 engraving of the scene from the first production of *The School for Scandal* at Drury Lane. The scenery and galleries, linked by the actors' proscenium arch doors, had evolved from the Elizabethan *frons scena*. Audience members relish a comedy of manners about themselves. Such synergy is rare. One can only hope that erudite scholarly teachers do not continue to rap brilliant young Rylance over the knuckles for up-to-date "business" and what they see as solecisms.

I was reminded of a chance encounter with Sam Wanamaker on an evening transatlantic flight after



Near the action: players and playgoers at Drury Lane in 1777

Mander & Mitcheson

we had both sat at the same table earlier that day for one of those Globe "meetings of minds". By Kennedy we decided that perhaps actors and directors should not tell academics what sort of Globe to build and conversely academics should not tell actors and directors how to use it.

IAN MACKINTOSH
Theatre Projects Consultants
London NW5

Sir: What is the matter with Victoria McKee? Her essay on the prologue season at the new Globe theatre

starts under the title "How does our play please you?" (24 September) and fails to address this question.

Like an undergraduate who found the *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* under the Christmas tree, she floods her article with Shakespearean lines, and after some snide comments about Paul Smith suits and American tourists with Harrods bags she arrives at the grand conclusion that there is still room for improvement in the use of this new venue.

I went to see *Two Gentlemen* with friends on the last Saturday of its run

and we were most impressed by the directness and the intensity of the experience, particularly when standing in front of the stage as "groundlings". The connection felt between crowd and actors in this thinness of plays was nothing short of extraordinary and must hint at the possibilities for future productions at the Globe. Maybe it wasn't the learning experience that Ms McKee was looking for, but as a theatrical event it was unique.

PETER KAHL

Maidenhead, Berkshire

The case for independent barristers

Sir: I am grateful to Patricia Wynn Davies ("Solicitors set to present cases in the higher courts", 23 September) for reminding your readers that it costs the taxpayer less to have an independent barrister prosecute average three-day jury trials than it would to use a lawyer employed by the Crown Prosecution Service.

More important reasons why independent advocates should continue to present the prosecution's case to a jury have been identified by the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Legal Education and Conduct.

In June 1995 the committee recommended that independent advocates (solicitors or barristers) should continue to conduct the prosecution of the majority of jury trials. It considered the question of whether specially qualified lawyers employed by the CPS might conduct those crown court cases which involve the least serious offences or do not involve a jury. Only a minority of the committee favoured this. The majority

took account of the need, in a modern democracy, for the power of the state to be open to scrutiny. Their principal concern was that the employed advocate's ability to maintain sufficient independence could well be undermined or that he or she might become "prosecution minded".

DAVID PENRY-DAVEY QC
Chairman, General Council of the Bar
London WC1

Sir: There appears to be some confusion over the figures relating to the number of barristers employed by the Crown Prosecution Service quoted by Patricia Wynn Davies in her article. To set the record straight, a quarter of the lawyers employed by the CPS, approximately 600 staff, are barristers.

JOHN OSULLIVAN
Head of Press and Publicity
Crown Prosecution Service
London EC4

Tourists stumble into Antarctica

Sir: Michael Streeter's article on pollution posing a threat to tourism in Antarctica (25th Sept) suggests that all nations mounting scientific programmes are not behaving responsibly. While there are some irresponsible nations, the major players (the British, Australians, Americans and New Zealanders) have operated strict protocols on the handling of waste and pollution for some time.

Tourism is increasing, and does pose problems. Large numbers of tourists invading scientific stations (often uninvited) disrupt scientific programmes during the short Antarctic summer. Hordes trooping across penguin rookeries can reduce the reproductive success of the birds. Unlike scientific personnel, tourists do not undergo rigorous medical tests. If there is a medical emergency on a tourist vessel, it is very likely that a scientific station would be called upon to help.

I have seen inappropriately dressed tourists being ferried around in inflatable boats, often some distance from their tour ship. I wonder who would be expected to undertake search and rescue if (when) an accident occurs.

The scientific community has put its house in order – I think the tour operators need to do some serious thinking.

The revenue from tourism does not benefit Antarctica – none of it is used to support scientific research or to assist in cleaning up the rubbish left by less responsible nations in the past.

PROFESSOR JOHANNA LAYBURN-PARRY

Department of Physiology and Environmental Science

University of Nottingham

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Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

LETTER from THE EDITOR

An architect's dream in danger

Sir:

We are concerned about the future of Brunswick Centre. Recent proposals to "update" and "improve" this small and distinctive chunk of Bloomsbury (two unsuccessful and one pending planning application) are short-sighted, timid, superficial and, worst of all, not in the spirit of the original dream. They do not recognise the potential of the place and give no assurance of real improvements to the fabric as a whole.

Twenty-five years on, Brunswick Centre needs a new heart. It has a long-term social, cultural and commercial future both for the local community and for London generally. There is now an opportunity to complete the place (in intent if not in extent), in line with its original architectural and urban aspirations. What is needed is some courage and much imagination. There is no time for tinkering.

We suggest that it is not only right but the best way forward that Patrick Hodgkinson, the original architect, be consulted about future plans and that he be appointed to advise the planning authority, the Royal Fine Art Commission, local Bloomsbury interest groups and the residents' association.

SIR DENYS LASDUN

ALDO VAN EYCK

Professor ROBERT TAVERNOR

(Bath University)

ELDRED EVANS

Professor ANDY MACMILLAN

(Mackintosh School of Architecture, Glasgow)

ANTHONY HUNT

SHERBAN CANTACUZINO

Professor DAVID SHALEV

(Bath University)

Professor ADRIAN GALE

(Plymouth University)

London NW3

A few years ago, I was offered a few days' holiday fill-in stint presenting the programme and, ever since, have listened to its presenters with some respect.

One sat with a huge pile of scripts, hurriedly written after waking at 4am, while a voice constantly rabbited in one's ear: "OK, we're dropping the Sri Lankan, so move straight to item 14, then back to seven..."

The Northampton midwife's been delayed, and you've 10 seconds till the weather..."

All the while, one had to affect vocal nonchalance, cracking gentle jokes with the co-presenter and pretending to know what was going on.

It wasn't easy, a bit like ice-skating while declaiming poetry, and I was, fearing the real presenters were kind, with the exception of Brian Redhead, who took a dim view of whippersnappers muscling in.

Just before I went on air with him for the first time, and was watching for the red light, he leaned over and poked his spectacles down his nose. "Thought you had a job on a newspaper?" he asked. I nervously assented. "Hmn. Then what d'you think you're doing sitting here?" he

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

The most important thing for a ballerina is to listen to her body. Every small sinew talks to you, and I listen hard – Silvie Guillen, principal artiste with the Royal Ballet

Girls have become the equals of men. They give their bodies as freely as we use to smoke cigarettes. It's a great loss of poetry, of humanity – Brigitte Bardot, former actress

Snails look quite elegant when drawing in their horns and curling up in their shells. Nations don't – Ferdinand Mount, once head of Margaret Thatcher's policy unit, attacking Euros

the saturday story

A week ago, Pakistan's Prime Minister buried her brother. It was the latest grief to strike the Bhuttos, whose family struggles are redolent of Shakespearean tragedy.

By Rebecca Fowler

Final episode for Benazir's dynasty?

Benazir Bhutto was at home to visitors last weekend in Larkana, her face stained with tears, surrounded by maids who poured endless cups of tea. The Prime Minister of Pakistan, who has attempted to bring together 130 million people in a new dawn of democracy, had been plunged into the latest family tragedy to hit one of the world's most glamorous and divided dynasties - the killing of her younger brother.

They laid Murtaza Bhutto, 41, to rest at the family graveyard near the ancestral home. He was buried beside his brother, Shahbaz, who died of poisoning in 1986, and his father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the former prime minister who was tortured and hanged by the military regime in 1979. His wife, Ghania, helped to lower the body into the grave, contrary to Islamic tradition, and placed roses on the spot watched by his younger brother.

Murtaza, who had returned to Pakistan in 1993 from Syria following alleged terrorist activities to avenge the death of his father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the former prime minister who was tortured and hanged by the military regime in 1979. His wife, Ghania, helped to lower the body into the grave, contrary to Islamic tradition, and placed roses on the spot watched by his younger brother.

They were suggesting the unthinkable, that Benazir and her husband had been involved in her brother's downfall; a claim that was reportedly sup-

ported by her own mother, who sided with Murtaza in the sibling feud. She later rejected this accusation. How appropriate, they said, that the ones who had murdered him should be making the funeral arrangements.

Behind the curtain of tragedy was a family at war who had played out their battles with Shakespearean zeal. But Murtaza's death has brought the feuding of the Bhuttos to an unseemly head, prompting speculation that this could be the end for the seventh generation of Bhutto politicians - who married an international lifestyle, Oxford educations and high fashion with the bloody politics of Pakistan.

The death of Murtaza, who had not talked to his sister for two years, has emerged as the greatest test to date of Benazir, already bowing under accusations of corruption from the president of Pakistan. For her detractors, the irony of her possible downfall would be that it came not from outside enemies, but from the betrayals within the Bhutto themselves.

Dr David Taylor, a lecturer in South Asian politics at London University's School of Oriental and African Studies, says: "It's a particularly brutal episode, and it's part of something that has been going on for some time. But Benazir has also been in serious trouble politically for quite a while, and this is another straw. Whether it proves to be the last remains to be seen."

It began, like all family feuds, before anyone could really remember, against the national backdrop of Pakistan's fierce tribal divisions, volatile governments and military coups.

The Bhuttos grew up at the centre of the fray, separated for long periods first for their own safety, and then by individual prison sentences in their bids to keep the Bhutto name alive in Pakistani politics.

From childhood Benazir, known as "Pinkie" to the family, was immersed in politics. Even at the age of nine her father wrote to her regularly about his political beliefs and ambitions. By the time she was a teenager she was sitting in on meetings with the likes of Henry Kissinger and Indira Gandhi.

When Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was arrested in 1979 on a murder charge, as the military took control of Pakistan, he groomed his daughter for the political stage from jail. He told her what to say, how to say it, and to wear his old Mac cap and clasp her hands above her head as he had done when he spoke to the people. From his death in April 1979 until the mid-Eighties, she and her mother were either in jail or under house arrest.

As they grew older, the arguments were no longer focused on television channels, but pol-

itics and they became even more bitter. Benazir described it as a strange upbringing. While she lived through the bloodshed and tyranny of Pakistani politics, she also went to Oxford and Harvard and travelled in Europe. In England she would drive around in her yellow MG; Saks of Fifth Avenue kept measurements of her clothes; and she delighted her father by becoming president of the Oxford Union, apparently more pleased by his reaction than the office itself.

Murtaza was 23 when he left Pakistan with his brother, following the military coup that overthrew his father. He fled for safety of Britain, and he was branded a terrorist in exile in connection with the hijacking of a Pakistan plane.

While his mother campaigned tirelessly for his return, Benazir was allegedly less enthusiastic, insisting that he would have to face the music in the Pakistani courts and could still receive 14 years' prison.

But relations with her younger brother had been strained from childhood. According to Murtaza, she was an authoritarian from the earliest age. "She would say: 'I want to watch this TV programme.' 'Don't make a noise, I'm reading.' Do this, or don't do that. It would provoke me and bother me more," he once said.

When her dream came true, Benazir was furious that Nusrat had chosen to side with her son, and his moves to set up his

own faction of the PPP. He also stood against her in the 1993 elections when she entered her second term as prime minister, amid claims that his sister had betrayed the socialist principles of her father and surrounded herself with fawning and corrupt ministers.

Murtaza in turn refused to call his sister by the family name, labelling her Mrs Zardari instead, implying she belonged to a different tribe. While he undermined the work of his sister's party with irritating verve, Nusrat claimed she was barred from the prime minister's residence in Islamabad, and was being gagged by the press.

But the relationship between the Bhutto siblings disintegrated even further when Benazir was married in an arranged wedding in 1987. The choice of Asif Zardari, known as a Karachi playboy and wealthy from property developing, infuriated Murtaza, who was convinced the Zardari family would use the marriage to take over the Bhutto legacy.

The

most devastating division

was drawn when their mother entered the fray. For years Nusrat had dreamed of her son returning to Pakistan, making public entreaties verging on the style of Greek tragedy on his behalf: "I have given you the world is there a patron-in-chief of a political party? You have a patron of a tennis club, a charity, an arts committee? So I refused. And she said: 'Well, it's over.'

There was a brief display of unity at the funeral last weekend, and Nusrat denied that she had suggested Benazir or her husband might be behind her son's death. But for Benazir it is perhaps fitting that the national problems she had attempted to overcome should

be mirrored so accurately by the internal wrangling and bloodshed in her own family.

As she continues to fight off the threat of another military take-over, and accusations that she has sunk into the tyrannies her father rose up against, it may yet be a tragedy too far for the Bhuttos. When General Zia ordered the torture and death of her father she swore she would never go into politics.

She said: "I grew up hating politics because of the fear that every time my father left the house I didn't know if he'd be coming back safely. I wanted a life that was ordered, a stable life. I decided that politics was the opposite of that because of all the dangers, so I used to say never, never, never for me."

Benazir added: "When I had my last meeting with my father in jail, he said: 'I leave the choice to you. You don't have to continue the struggle. You've suffered enough.' I said 'No, pap. I'll never leave the struggle. At that moment I realised that I could never leave it. Too many people had lost their lives.'

As the roses began to wilt on Murtaza's grave, however, political insiders speculated that this may be the end for Benazir, too. On Monday she will come to Britain to discuss the future of Pakistani politics. They have quipped that on Tuesday she, too, will be preparing to give up the struggle to pursue a role in international diplomacy instead, making the latest chapter in the family feud the last.

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How cheering to see that an appeals tribunal has overturned a decision that two waitresses in a Derby hotel were not discriminated against when they were inadvertently dragged into a Bernard Manning routine.

Sadly, Bernard Manning himself has got off, and it is the hotel that has had to take responsibility for his revolting racist humour. Mr Manning has stated that the case was "nothing to do with me," which, of course, is total cobblers, because he is the one peddling this vicious rubbish. Isn't it about time the law moved to stop this kind of scummy racist humour?

Mr Manning had said while eyeing the waitresses: "I hear you darkies are good at giving blow jobs." As if anyone is going to put their mouth anywhere near that offensive appendage. Still, it's a sight less offensive than his mouth. Perhaps, the group of offenders who have come off rather lightly in all this are the audience, members of the Round Table. Does this bunch do a lot of work for charity? I'd certainly think twice before accepting their money.

The Catholic church has issued guidelines to those in

its employ in the wake of one of its more senior members succumbing to the charms of the flesh. Rather amusingly, it warns that priests should beware of "hysterical" women.

Who are these hysterical women? The word comes from the Greeks who thought that women's wombs went off wandering round their bodies, and was purloined by that old coke-head Sigmund Freud and put to very good use on a handful of posh women who reckoned they were paralysed. (Always a good way of getting out of the hoovering that one.)

Perhaps "hysterical" is an unfortunate choice of word, because if these women's reproductive organs were constantly on the move round their bodies it would not have been quite so easy for so many Catholic priests to utilise them for procreative purposes.

So the truth about Inspector Morse's first name is out and the poor old bargee has been saddled with "Endeavour". No wonder he kept schtum about that. I had my money on Englebert. It is a timely reminder, though, of the suffering one goes through at school if one has been landed with a ridiculous name. At my

primary school most of us had names such as Susan or Jane, and it was middle names people waited to hear with baited breath at confirmations and the like, as grandmas and aged aunts were remembered in profusion. I think the greatest surprise I got was with someone I used to work with, whose middle name initial I noticed once and asked what it stood for. "Salome," she replied, fairly unconcerned. Makes my own "Grace" seem very pedestrian.

As I stay in hotels for much of the year I was interested to read the new *Which?* guide to hotels. Highest on its list of customer complaints are unfriendliness of staff and dirtiness of rooms. These vary tremendously, depending on the place and how important

princess conducted courteously to my room and pampered for the duration of my stay. Was I happy, contented and impressed? No. All I felt was an enormous amount of resentment.

The debate rages on about women's clothes and how provocative they can afford to be before testosterone explodes in the male frame and said man is helpless to resist sexually abusing scantly dressed woman in question. Interestingly, women are split on the debate with the dress-down because we know they can't control themselves brigade versus the wear-what-you-like-and-bugger-the-consequences mob. I have to say I am with the latter, because potential sex attackers have to learn not to behave in this way, rather than society getting embroiled in a debate about degrees of provocative dress. A short skirt or high heels are merely an excuse, which is very handily reinforced by many old crooks from the judiciary. We should bear in mind that rape victims range in age from children to the elderly and from beautiful to unattractive, and they're not all wearing low-cut, flimsy clothes.

jo brand's week



3 Man of Mode Melvin Tan's departure

We have no idea where to go at the moment that we can say that we are ready to go as you are.

The Independent Weekend

All downhill from there

How ski holidays began, page 14



Arts



3 Man of Modes – Melvin Tan's new departure

You have no idea what it is like to sit at a modern instrument and know that what you play will come out exactly as you play it

Books



5 Man of Moods – the angst of Samuel Beckett

A solitary child, a withdrawn adolescent, a reluctant academic, a diffident lover, a brooding presence in drawing rooms from London to Munich

Shopping



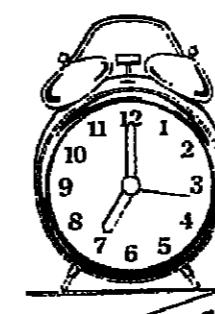
9 Man of Mode – Tommy Hilfiger, over here at last

Hilfiger is the current success story of American fashion, offering a brand of hip, affordable "urban prep" derived from the melting pot of American life

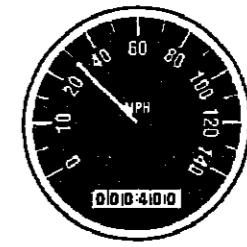
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A When is a seven-hour play shorter than a one-hour performance? It's a question of rhythm

How long is a long play? This question, provoked by the opening of Robert Lepage's seven-hour vignette *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* and Harold Pinter's hour-long marathon *Ashes to Ashes*, is not one that a stopwatch will help you answer. The longest play I ever saw, for example, was a two-hour production of an existential drama in east Beirut. When the play was over I had to return to west Beirut through checkpoints manned by heavily-armed men whose attitude to existential drama was likely to be equivocal, at the very best. I felt that every second of stage time added to their potential impatience. It was similar to the anxiety of missing the last bus home, with the added possibility that the conductor might shoot at you from the platform.

By contrast, the five-and-a-half hour production of *Hamlet* that I saw in Bucharest was a breeze. The naps helped,

naturally, but there was something else besides – an air of rapt, unrestive attention in an auditorium so full that people were sitting in the aisles. When the curtain calls had finally ended it became clear what had distilled such patience.

The audience emerged from the theatre into what was a tedious commonplace for them but magically strange for a western visitor – a capital city as dark as a country wood. Here and there a dim gleam shone through thin curtains but there wasn't enough electricity for street lights, let alone neon, and there was nothing in the shopfronts worthy of illumination. Above the dark rooftops of apartment blocks and offices you could see the stars shining, undimmed by the glow-worm light of pocket torches, which people were using to pick their way home. Had the performance been even longer this audience would probably have been grateful; noth-

ing else was waiting for their attention.

Strictly speaking, both of those examples represent trivial cases – or at least non-theatrical influences on our perception of duration. When it comes to internal adjustments of the sense of time, matters become a little more complex. While stage-time isn't clock-time, for example, it nevertheless obeys a kind of rhythm –

Harold Pinter's famous pauses wouldn't even be detectable as such unless we were somehow aware that speech had arrived late, behind the beat. Any regular audience becomes trained to certain intervals and the machinery that governs those intervals may be buried very deep.

In his essay *The Duration of the Present Moment*, the Czech poet Miroslav Holub writes about the psychological finding that the clock of human perception seems to tick about every three seconds. Asked to reproduce an audible signal, most people will unconsciously extend anything that is under two seconds, become notably more accurate with signals between two and three seconds and then start to shorten signals over three seconds. Holub points out that an analysis of formal poetic metre seems to show an obedience to this internal metronome – what he calls a "carrier wave".

There are other suggestions, too: wrin-

king about the notorious slowness of Nobu-drama, William Empson builds his explanation of its effect round another bodily clock, arguing that the accompanying music governs your emotional response: "A rhythm quicker than the heartbeat," he writes, "is one that you seem to control, or that seems controlled by some person: the apparently vast field of our music is always the frankness of the West, always the individual speaking up. Music based on rhythms slower than the heartbeat can carry a great weight of emotion and even of introspection ... but it remains somehow impersonal." If theatrical speech obeys the law of the moment, there are larger-scale units that play their part, too – culturally reinforced rhythms of dialogue, scenes, even of incident. And different playwrights will use these rhythms in different ways. Extra duration, for example, offers the writer two opposed possibilities – the chance to get

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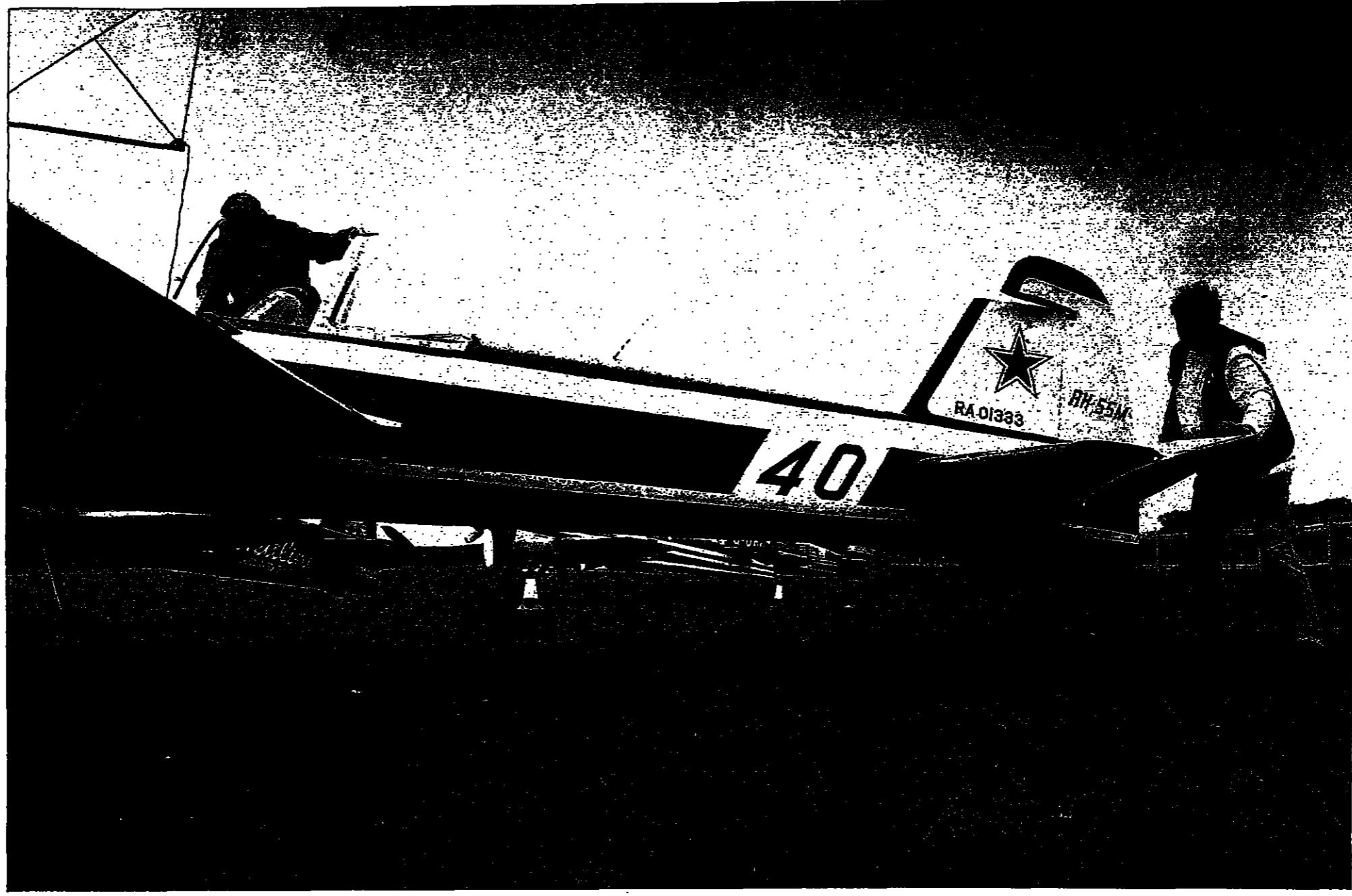
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cover: © Christie's

THOMAS SUTCLIFFE



Those magnificent men... .

SERENA
MACKESY



In another life

From Cuban Eights to
Avalanches, from Lomcevaks to
Humpty Bumps – thrill-seekers
struggle with G-forces to seek
geometrical perfection in the
clouds at the National
Aerobatics Championships.
Photograph by John Lawrence

There are five categories of competitive aerobatics: Beginner, Standard, Intermediate, Advanced and Unlimited. Funny: I always thought the sky was the limit. "At Beginner's level, all you do is something like a loop and a roll," says Nick Wakefield, a display pilot who did his first loop and roll in the Cambridge University Air Squadron. He's on hand at the Aviator Hotel at Sywell, Northampton, to do "whatever needs to be done" to ensure the smooth running of the National Aerobatics Championships.

The winner at Unlimited level becomes British Aerobic Champion. The competition, the last and most important of a season which runs roughly from March until now, is also used to select the pilots for next year's European Championships. They take place every two years, alternating with the World Championships.

The Aviator Hotel is one of those square concrete places, painted yellow and surrounded on the roadside by chalet-style rooms reminiscent of the Bates Motel. The restaurant is vaguely Art Deco, with flight memorabilia scattered about. Men in kit chat in groups, backs turned to a glass display case. Inside is a memorial to a Lancaster bomber which crashed nearby. A shelf holds copies of those sepia-tinted studio photos everyone had taken of their sons as an unspoken hedge against never seeing them again: uniformed, grinning, bursing with promise. Lovely boys who could have been dandling grandchildren by now. The propeller is polished, and propped up by the baby grand. It's a jarring reminder of how this sport came about.

Thoughts of death, though, are far from the minds of the competitors, who are on their practice day, running through the routines they hope will bring them another kind of glory tomorrow. The nearest I've come to aerobatics was in one of those big wheels with the revolving cages. The fear of flying upside-down was so intense that it's beyond me to imagine how you could do it and steer at the same time. Typically, though, of those who take part in these adrenaline-heavy sports, no one is prepared to admit any element of fear.

"Loop-the-loops," says Nick, "are very simple when you've progressed beyond them. When you first do them they're very, very difficult. It's a bit like when you first learn to drive. You can keep a straight line, but anything like that is beyond you. And once you've got your licence you've hacked that part of it. Starting aerobatics is a bit like starting all over again. You're learning to fly again and it's all a bit disorientating at first."

Understatement, it seems, is all part of the game. The stresses are actually enormous. Even Nick concedes that, "Physically it's very demanding. You'll be absolutely knackered after you've finished a sequence." The main problem is the G-forces. One G is the weight of gravity. These people regularly subject themselves to eight or nine. It's the corners that are the worst: when you're flying straight up, you are weightless. Upside-down is dodgy as well: when you're hanging by your shoulder straps the blood pools in your head.

It's also got tougher improvements in equipment having increased the stresses. Mike Riley, chief judge, and a Concorde pilot in his spare time, started flying aerobatically in the early Sixties: he was 17 when he first grabbed a joystick. "It used to be very physical, we thought, 20 or 30 years ago, but the machinery has improved so much that the aeroplanes are now much stronger than the pilots." No one who flies planes uses the short word to describe them. If you respect the machine, you call it an aeroplane. "It used to be that the aeroplanes could break if they were misused. These machines are so strong and manoeuvrable that physically you are very much a weak link. You're pushing your own physical limits in an area in which there is very little knowledge."

Nick has represented the country "three or four times, I can't remember", and was chief judge at the World Championships in 1990. He still teaches and flies for fun, but doesn't compete any more. He's very clear on the thrill of why you do it. "It's the challenge of pure flying. It's purely and simply aeroplane handling skill. Aviation is a relatively

new human experience and, though we're not the first generation, we're the first century to be able to pursue this particular sport. One is very much at the cutting edge of a new human experience."

Once you have passed through the hotel, you suddenly realise the point of having it there. French windows lead onto a lawn, and then on to Sywell Airfield. A picket fence stops you from wandering on to the runway, and a sign adorns a stone post: "DANGER BEYOND THIS POINT".

In front of us is a line of helicopters. People in

overalls bustle round them; one is being shifted manually with the help of little yellow wheels clamped to its landing bars. Looking at the mechanics, you would think that this is a world quite heavily infiltrated by women. Not so. Most pilots are men. The handlebar moustaches may have flown off skywards, but testosterone still dominates. Only one woman is flying in the competition, Annabel Wakefield, Nick's wife. "There aren't many women doing it, no," says Nick, "though the best British pilot by far is a woman called Louise Knapp. She's about 25 and incredibly talented."

In the sky, a tiny black and red insect – you would be hard pushed to park more than three Ford Fiestas in the space they fill – flies a straight line upwards, pauses, slides backwards on its own trajectory, flips over and plunges head-first toward the ground. This, apparently, is called a Tailslide. They have some great shop-talk, these flyboys: they do flick rolls and snap rolls and Lomcevaks (Czech for headache), Cuban Eights (a figure eight

flown sideways, so called because the Cubans are always asleep), Avalanches ("a Swiss manoeuvre") and Humpty Bumps.

Planes vary from around \$200,000 – Sukois, CAPs and Extras (named after their German designer, Walther Extra) – to £15,000 for a third-hand self-built biplane. Mike walks me round, pointing out their features: he recognises individual planes like a bloodstock expert recognises horses. Four-blade propellers for noise reduction, titanium bodies, carbon fibre wings. Seats are tilted at 45 degrees; pilots fly with their feet in stirrups as though preparing for gynaecological examination. This, apparently, lessens the G-forces.

Thomas Hauerter, a Swiss DC-10 pilot, reckons he spends about £12,000 a year on his hobby. Why does he do it? "Sometimes I'm asking myself the same question. Sometimes it can be very frustrating. But it's a great sport. It's a good combination of the physical and mental."

Mental, everyone stresses, is what it's all about. Unlike air-show display flying, which is all about crowd-pleasing, talk here is of precision and geometrical accuracy. It's the difference between dressage and show jumping: the uninitiated may enjoy the jumpers more, but dressage is where the real skill lies. Competitors fly a sequence of manoeuvres and are marked down from a perfect 10 for each. "The psychology of the sport is interesting," says Mike. "The pilots are trying to create perfection and the judges' only interest is in the negative side of it. So the pilot has this feeling that the judges are doing something destructive. In a big competition this can create a sense of conflict. People get rather paranoid."

Fully conversant with this paranoia is Alan Wade, competing in Unlimited for the first time in nine years. He started his career as a flying instructor. "But you do get very bored being a flying instructor. It's like being a driving instructor. And it doesn't pay as much." So he took on that extra challenge of doing it upside-down. He's been doing air shows around Europe – "I had to stop competition flying to earn a living" – and only decided to enter three weeks ago. He's a bit trepidacious about his lack of preparation.

That, though, he doesn't necessarily see as justification for failure. "If you walk around and talk to the pilots, none of them have practised for three months, they only got the aeroplane back yesterday, there's far too much fuel in it and so forth. But when it comes down to it, it's all down to the guy holding the stick. There are no excuses."

هذا من الأصل

A piano-player's life begins at forte

The rest of the world woke up to the possibilities of the modern pianoforte almost two centuries ago. So why has it taken Melvyn Tan so long to catch up? As the noted fortepiаниst marks his 40th birthday by moving over to the modern concert grand, Edward Seckerson suggests that fear was only partly the key

A copy of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* Sonata lies open on the shiny new Bösendorfer. And for a moment or two you wonder what it's doing there - the Bösendorfer, that is, not the Beethoven. For this is Melvyn Tan's west London studio and for the past 15 or so years Tan has been famously estranged from the modern piano. Too much Liszt at college - that's one theory. Or too little Mozart. At any rate, every man's pianoforte became this man's fortepiano. In his own words, he became "lost in the historical perspective" of these temperamental, deceptively soft-spoken instruments. He collected them, learnt to love them, understand them, master them - so far as one could ever master them. His elegant physique and countenance became almost an extension of them. It was hard to imagine that Melvyn Tan could ever again grace anything quite so vulgar as a Steinway grand.

Yet here he was hiding away a modern Bösendorfer like some illicit lover. Well, not exactly. Tan is 40 in a fortnight's time - on 13 October, to be exact - and will be celebrating "with friends" (the mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter and cellist Steven Isseris) at a Wigmore Hall concert the day before, when he'll discreetly make public his intention henceforth to divide himself between fortepiano and pianoforte - by playing both. Quite a moment! Melvyn Tan and the modern piano effectively "outed" in London society. Given his reputation, his seemingly unshakeable allegiance to the fortepiano, it's tantamount to a Pauline conversion. But Tan is playing it down. "I prefer to think of it as more of a natural progression," he says. "I've made my statement about these early instruments. I've explored them in their historical context, discovered to what extent they fashioned the music of their time ... so maybe I can just get on now and play the piano..."

Well, that is where he first came in. At the Menuhin School, the piano, the modern piano, was Tan's primary study. But his playing wasn't progressing. Or rather, his playing was, but he wasn't. Melvyn Tan, the musician, needed to grow, grow into and through the repertoire he played. Feel a part of it, spiritually, historically. Acres of Liszt and Szymanowski weren't about to do that for him. Aspirations to conduct (now ancient history, he assures me) were subsequently thwarted by the Royal College of Music's refusal to accept conducting as a subsidiary study to piano. So the harpsichord became his second instrument. And something connected. The instrument, the period, the sound and style. Something. It was as if he'd been spirited back in time and met himself coming the other way. Now the fortepiano caught his ear, lightened his touch, "contained" his playing in a way that all that Liszt and Szymanowski had not. He played Mozart for the first time, from Mozart's perspective, and he loved the feel of it. The lighter construction of the older instrument (wood as opposed to iron frame, thinner strings, lower tensions), the clear, bright, immediate, singing tone, the absence of resonance encouraging coaxing, teasing subtler articulations. A whole new vocabulary of terms. Mozart began here. So, in a sense, did Tan. But what happens when you move on, and the instruments don't...?

Watch Tan in action, and you see a dancer, a little, physical player whose body moves freely, gracefully, with every contour of the music. What you hear is a desire to express more than the instrument will allow. So you ask the inevitable question. Over the past 15 years, has he not felt increasingly confined, frustrated? Why has it taken so long for him to go where no fortepiano has ever gone before? The answer is an honest one. Fear (better the devil you know), intimidation (Tan's deference to his peers knows no bounds). But something else, too. It was Nadia Boulanger, his teacher in Paris, who repeatedly impressed upon him that only through discipline do we ultimately achieve freedom. He didn't understand what she meant at the time (he was barely into his teens), but in forsaking the modern piano for the fortepiano, the realisation began to dawn. It wasn't a question of choice but of necessity. The instrument compelled him to rein in, to internalise his playing, to do less but make more happen, and in so doing to understand how it felt for these composers to transcend the limitations of the instrument through the imagination. Stravinsky once described Beethoven's last sonata, Op 111, as "all acoustics. Everything is vibrating. The low notes vibrating with the top notes." A deaf man's study in resonance. But it took another composer to hear it.

Which brings us back to that shiny new Bösendorfer. A year ago, while visiting the 17th-century palazzo of his friend Feranda Giulini in Milan, Tan encountered a modern Bösendorfer ("an Imperial, but very light") among her extensive collection of fortepianos. He sat down and began doodling. A little Chopin... just for fun, well, you understand... "I remember thinking, well,

this is really rather nice..." - which is a fortepianiast's way of saying that he was hopelessly smitten, that he hadn't experienced a thrill like it since laying hands on Beethoven's own 1817 Broadwood. A phone call to Bösendorfer secured him a two-month rental on an instrument of his own. Just a rental, you understand...

Still, I imagine that royalties from the BBC's *Pride and Prejudice* have helped square the purchase (a quick canter through Carl Davis's main title theme is probably the easiest money Tan has ever made). It might well have changed his life. An impromptu demonstration - a snatch or two of the *Hammerklavier* - satisfies my curiosity. András Schiff, the Hungarian pianist, once told me that if he were to play the opening of that piece on Beethoven's own piano - and play it exactly as Beethoven had imagined it - then that would be the end of it. The piano, that is. Broken strings, broken hammer shanks, heaven knows what else. But Tan should know - he toured Europe with that particular piano just a few years ago.

Right now he's striking out on his 1838 Streicher: dry and immediate, rhythms cut to the bone. No depth, no resonance. Over to the Bösendorfer. His whole countenance changes. He looks more expansive. "You see, I hear so many more inner voices, so much more resonance in the middle! The notes sustain longer, so you hear the overtones better, with all the harmonic implications. It really brings to life the fantasy-like nature of the music, doesn't it?" He is preaching to the converted.

Only last month, in San Francisco, Tan played Mozart Concertos on the modern concert grand. In his words, he felt "almost embarrassed" at the freedom it afforded him. So you can see, there are psychological barriers to be crossed here. No question, the modern piano can actively encourage indulgence. But, by the same token, the fortepiano can create tensions, inhibitions, of its own. Tan himself is rediscovering what it is to relax into a piece, to open up phrasings, explore colour and dynamics, relate spirit to sound once more.

"You have no idea what it is like to sit at a modern instrument and know that it will sound exactly as it did in rehearsal, that what you play will come out exactly as you play it, and that, if anything goes wrong, then it's your fault. On the fortepiano, you never really can tell what it is going to do. And if a single note doesn't repeat as you remembered it last time, it can ruin your concentration, it can throw your whole performance out of alignment. You learn to compensate - maybe play a phrase less quickly to ensure that the note does speak, and so on - but always at the back of your mind is the question: is this going to work?"

So the born-again Melvyn Tan is going to have two distinct playing personalities - the one informing the other. He has no intention of phasing out the instrument he loves to hate - not after all that perseverance. Besides, playing Clementi or Mozart on a tiny keyboard is still his idea of heaven. But make no mistake, the shiny Bösendorfer has opened up a second childhood for him. He looks forward to playing it each day; he looks forward to all that new repertoire. Chopin, of course. And Schumann. His Wigmore Hall recital in July 1997 - his first on the modern piano - will feature both the Chopin *Preludes* and Schumann's *Kreisleriana*. Then there's the concerto repertoire, the prospect of working with conductors who aren't period specialists, whose broader horizons will hopefully enrich his own work. Bookings for the Schumann concerto are already looking good, then there are the Chopins, the Saint-Saëns, the Mendelssohn G minor and the Ravel G major (I can hear - and see - Tan cutting a dash with that piece).

But then it's hardly surprising that he should feel such affinity with the French repertoire. To be nurtured at such a tender age by the likes of Vlado Perlemuter (pupil of Ravel) and Nadia Boulanger (who studied with Faure). None of his teachers was German - which is probably why he has to work that much harder at Brahms. Or is it simply a matter of temperament and taste? The fine-spun, delicate, but highly coloured French sound that Boulanger favoured came naturally to him. It wasn't something he learnt. He remembers feeling frustrated that Perlemuter said so little to him during his lessons. He'd just point him in the right direction and let him play. But now he realises that everything that really matters about music cannot be taught, only discovered. "Having had the experience of the last 15 or 16 years of growing as a musician, albeit in a particular field of learning, I feel like I can now apply that learning to my new adventures..."

Life begins at 40? Could be.

Melvyn Tan's 40th Birthday Concert is on Saturday 12 October at the Wigmore Hall, London W1 (booking: 0171-935 2141)



You have no idea what it is like to sit at a modern instrument and know that it will sound exactly as it did in rehearsal, that what you play will come out exactly as you play it: two weeks short of his 40th birthday, virtuoso fortepianiast Melvyn Tan revels in the state-of-the-art reliability of his new Bösendorfer concert grand after some 15 years spent combatting the built-in unpredictability of its ancient predecessor

Photograph: John Lawrence

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arts reviews

Laugh? I very nearly joined the fan club

Mark Wareham has never had much time for Victoria Wood: all that bland bonhomie, those songs. So he wasn't exactly looking forward to two hours in her company. But then...

"I come straight out with it. I don't like Victoria Wood. Maybe we just got off on the wrong foot, I don't know, but the first and only time I saw her live was in the West End some eight years ago (she doesn't tour that often) and boy did I suffer. Her material was bland and trite, her mannerisms irritating, her humour clever-clever at the expense of comic... And then there were the songs. Paeans to the God of Cringe, her jolly piano ditties had me squirming so intensely I wore out what was left of the velvet on my once plush West End seat.

So here we go again for the first of a string of dates at London's Royal Albert Hall, rounding off an extensive sell-out schlep through the country's theatres and civic halls. One of comedy's great untouchables nonchalantly accepts a tumultuous 5,000-strong Albert Hall welcome as she bounds on to the stage... or rather 4,999-strong. Because I know what's coming, don't I?

"Ay," she begins, looking up at the cliff of seats stretching up to the roof where I'm seated plumb-faced. "Well, it gets you out of the house, don't it." And it's about five minutes into the set (I know this because I've been looking at my neighbour's watch on the minute every minute) when a gag about the emergency Lilet in her handbag that doubles as an anti-mugging device (it's so old, the assailant dies of toxic shock syndrome) causes someone to erupt and, yes, spray me with their laughter spittle. I look around, indignantly at first, and then somewhat sheepishly as it registers that those laughing juices are my laughing juices. It is my laughter. I have been laughing at Victoria Wood.

You can guess the rest. The brilliance of her delivery as she leaves a punchline dangling, pausing for so long she has time to take a sip of water, before returning to finish it off with a flourish. The sheer dazzling wordplay of the writing, inviting comparisons with Alan Bennett in its pacing and dryness. And, for a performer not naturally given to audience interaction, the confidence to break off three times mid-song and shout down a zealous punter determined to start a clap-happy singalong.



Smutty without being crude, she manages the not-inconsiderable feat of talking about her public life – it's all over the place, spreading, joining, clumping up – it's like some bloody rockery plant – and making it sound almost sweet. The

material is everything you'd expect from Ruby Wax or French & Saunders – cellulite, shopping, colonic irrigation – but so much better observed. And when she pulls a yellow bonnet tight over her face and dons an orange plastic mac for one

of her nerdish characters, you can see who Jane Horrocks has been studying. And, get this, even the musical interludes are bearable, particularly an anti-PC lament about not being able to use a word that rhymes with "hanker".

She sings, she tells jokes, she's Victoria Wood (left). If only she didn't sing...

Until she goes and spoils it all with one of those songs, those special songs, that leave you curled up with embarrassment, knees tucked tightly under your chin, as she wails a heartbreak ballad about looking for "a better day", head tossing from side to side à la Miss Piggy. It's that Mike Yarwood "and this is me" moment, when all you can do is sit there, squirming, and praying that the piano lid might come crashing down on her fingers, because her yelping would be more musical.

OK, so I'm being picky, but I still find her Mrs Normal routine irritatingly jarringly. Call me a stickler, but I like my observational comedy to contain at least a germ of reality, and Victoria Wood with her bags of shopping on a number 19 bus up the Archway Road doesn't quite get there. And couldn't she please spare us the *Crossroads* material and burning insights into the family Christmas?

And so there I was hanging by a thread, still telling myself that I wasn't really a convert, when she came on for the finale, done up as a pulsating Page-3 mane into the air while shrieking instructions at the audience. Whether or not the sketch was funny I can't recall, but as an exercise in comic bravery and, it must be said, self-ridicule, it was unsurpassable. If ever proof were needed that Victoria Wood doesn't take herself, or indeed her body, too seriously, then you only needed to see how tightly she was crammed into her one-piece (and I'd been wondering why no press photographers were allowed in). That, I'm afraid, sealed it. An education.

Royal Albert Hall, London SW1 (0171-589 8212) to 6 Oct.

TELEVISION All Rise for Julian Clary, BBC2

Alas! poor Julian, his jokes are beginning to wear as thin as a moth-eaten party frock. By Jasper Rees

How long can Julian Clary keep it up? His act depends as much on his Dorian Gray looks as his ability to innuendo his way out of a hole (and indeed into one). You can see his future mapped out to resemble the fate of a glamorous actress: as the wrinkles cluster around the neck, the phone rings. When the beauty fades, he might end up being ushered to the margins as quickly as Norman Lamont, the butt of the infamous quip that cost Clary the job to die for of hosting *The Generation Game*.

All Rise for Julian Clary is the latest vehicle to be assembled to its specifications. After one outing, it's already come down with format fatigue, the curse of so many shows that chase the rainbow of novelty. It's embarrassing just to have to explain it, let alone present it, but what happens is that our host sits in judgement over members of the public who bring their squabbles to him.

First up was a man who accused his female neighbours of forcing him to enter a gardening contest. The case was generously endowed with pointless triviality, and jarred alarmingly with a more genuine dispute between two friends who had fallen out after one of them ended their singing partnership.

The monstrosity of the set works hard to underscore a general air of chuminess. Far too grand for Clary's purposes, it obliges him to go on long, lonely walks between the two benches that seat the contestants. Perched in what would be the judge's chair in any normal court is his bewigged sidekick Frank Thornton, who's presumably desperate for the money. His presence is an indirect reminder of the days when Clary's spiritual ancestor John Inman played the nation's least threatening homosexual. Not much has changed since Inman's day: the jokes are perhaps more risqué now (as a judge, Clary says he's "more rump than pole")

and these days his guests know the form. In every sense playing the straight man, one knowingly described his two bedrooms as "front and back".

Like Inman, Clary's humour works best when he's hemmed in by diehard heteros, whom he makes the targets of his putdowns. Whatever the opposite of a fag bag is, he's it. (A het hen?) It's telling that the weakest part of the show came when he had Lionel Blair on: Clary is at his least funny when bounting gags off the almost-as-camp. That would count as friendly fire, whereas his gunshots are aimed squarely on the naffily dressed enemy.

Blair was taking part in the "Celebrities to the Hebrides" slot, in which the famous stand accused of whoring themselves around shows precisely like this one. It would be too gaudy to see it happen, but we oughtn't to rule out Clary's own mutation from host to perpetual guest chasing the next cheque.

POETRY Linton Kwesi Johnson, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London

The king of dub poetry has turned his thoughts to love. Is he mellowing with age? Michael Glover listens up

John La Rose, veteran Caribbean poet and publisher was laughing fit to bust a gut as he made his way into the Queen Elizabeth Hall with a few old friends on Wednesday. "You know," he said as we all jostled our way forward in a party mood, "I've never seen Linton around a woman. He used to say: 'First of all, I have to go home and wash my clothes.' Every one guffawed a bit harder. "...and now I hear he's writing love poems..."

That fragment of insider information was the first shock of the night: to hear that Linton Kwesi Johnson, Associate Fellow of Warwick University, Honorary Fellow of Wolverhampton Polytechnic, and author of "Mi Revalueshanary Fren", "Di Great Insorchechan" and much else, might, at the age of 44, no longer be using words primarily as incendiary devices.

The second shock happened on the stage itself. A dapper gentleman suddenly appeared in a crisp beige suit, sans hat, carrying a rolled-up poster. He looked

sleek and suave enough to be any thinking man's idea of a croupier's croupier. And he both did – and did not – resemble Linton Kwesi Johnson...

"I'm sorry," he said, "but Linton Kwesi Johnson couldn't be here tonight. I'm substitutin' for him." Then he unrolled the poster that was wallpapering the foyer. "Just look at this," he said, snapping at it contemptuously with his finger nail. It was a giant image of Linton in profile, with that little jutting goatee beard, and the famous trilby hat cocked back at a chirpy angle, every ignorant white policeman's ideas of truth and justice. "Just read what it says here: 'The heart and soul of Jamaican music.' How ridiculous can you get!"

And that's precisely what we didn't get. Instead Linton Kwesi Johnson – yes, it was he – gave us an evening of sleek, well rehearsed examples of product from LKJ, his own record label: 20 minutes of Linton Kwesi Johnson reading his poems unaccompanied; half an hour from his reg-

ular accompanists, the eight-piece Dennis Bovell Dub Band; and a final 45 minutes of Linton (in that trilby now) and the band.

The dullest bit came first: to hear LKJ perform unaccompanied draws too much attention to the limitations of a writer who has no qualms whatsoever about rhyming "cabbage" with "knowledge". On the other hand, to hear him perform with a band as tight and as well rehearsed as Dennis Bovell's is an entirely different experience: now the rhetorical force of all this powerful sloganising gains from the persuasive energies of the music and the words in combination with each other.

Linton understates his role in all this with that unsmiling, dead-pan delivery of his as he shuffled backwards from the microphone, pumping his arms like the pistons of some old-fashioned steam train. Now he has transformed himself into a really engaging performer; but none of this has much to do with well crafted poetry – or whether or not he is speaking the truth.

CLASSICAL MUSIC Roberto Gerhard / Nash Ensemble, Wigmore Hall, London

Nicholas Williams is impressed by a 100th anniversary tribute to a composer who answered the turbulence of the 20th century with musical moderation

Is it possible to learn about a composer's mind from our experience of his music? The sound may reveal more than the photographic image. The cover of the *Songs of the Auvergne*, each item implied a delicious tale that was illustrated with ravishing music. But there seemed a lack of involvement in the text. Gerhard was not overmuch concerned for the fate of his folksong characters.

Seven excellently performed French haiku offered ideal material for this kind of approach. The accompaniment of wind quartet and piano had terse, almost graphic images to partner the soprano through each fragment. "I caressed your floating stream" brought forth burbling flute and clarinet; the "Black-edged thought at the bottom of my cocktail of oblivion" was echoed by bassoon and clarinet grumbling around in their lowest register.

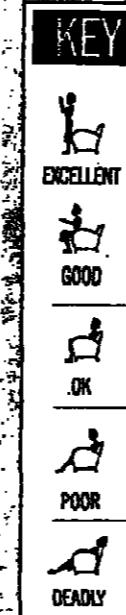
Two late pieces grew most strongly from the roots of Gerhard's character. The nervous, quirky *Concert for Eight*, with mandolin, guitar and accordion, showed a mind devoted to detail and removed from extra-musical events.

Leo, his last work, was an emblematic portrayal of fortitude. An ebullient rising phrase on violin and trumpet said "energy" whenever it appeared. The music remained mainly in its repression of direct expression until the late arrival of a clarinet theme, delicately played by Michael Collins. Gerhard had partnered the work with another piece, *Libra*, his own star sign, which is much to the point. He was a man who weighed everything in the balance; a sensitive man who gave everything its worth. One felt it in the music of this polished tribute, along with the sense that the composer himself was getting his fair due.



OVERVIEW

Critical view



ON View

Glen Gilroy was unimpressed. "It's nothing more than another showcase for Martin's slim talents." Four Marots prove no funnier than one, claimed the Times. "Groundhog Day was developed with surprising warmth and inventiveness. *Multiplicity* opts for gusto and is often mean-spirited." *Marots*'s Jani Murray was more than a little weary, however, describing the film as "a sentimental comedy about masculinity, mortality and the roads not taken". The development is tony and smart. *The Guardian* remained on the lookout for sex scenes.

12 mins, cert 12. They should have called it *Multiplicity*.

Most people probably best remember Edward Albee's acidic portrait of a marriage in crisis from the 1966 film with Burton and Taylor. This production finds Diana Rigg and David Suchet hosting the dinner party from hell.

A rambunctious foray into the sexual comedy of the 1960s. A show that includes homoeroticism and S&M. A show that includes homophobia and sexism.

Given his reputation, the majority of Maplethorpe's pictures now seem almost shockingly devoid of sexual intensity, mused Andrew Graham-Dixon. "He was not – as is sometimes claimed, one of the very greatest photographers, but he is a very good one," he concluded. "By dying far too soon, he deprived contemporary photography of an intense singular vision which surely would have deepened," argued the *Times*. However, said the *Daily Telegraph*, "the exhibition's male models in various states of undress and degrading and dehumanising torment."

In conjunction with the Anthony Gormley exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, London SE1, till 27 Nov.

Had the artist lived a different life, the semi-religious quality of his work might have been noted more often. His truest desire was for self-transcendence.

Next Week in the Arts

Monday: Steve Reich reveals the trick of making a little go a long way.
Tuesday: Andrew Graham-Dixon casts an eye over the Rachel Whiteread show.
Wednesday: Paul Taylor joins the party as the Royal Court bids farewell to Sloane Square.
Thursday: Chris Peachment meets Michael Winterbottom, the director of *Jude*.
Friday: Michael Church takes a musical trip down the Volga

Portrait of the artist as a scrofulous gargoyle

A new biography of the hermitic Nobel laureate is a triumph of scholarship and sympathy. By John Walsh

Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett by James Knowlson, Bloomsbury, £25

As a child it was Samuel Beckett's habit to fling himself out of trees. He would climb to the top of a 60-foot fir and launch himself at the ground, relying on the lower branches to break his fall, and clambering back up until stopped by his long-suffering mother. James Knowlson's biography reveals that the grown-up Beckett was also obsessively keen on perilous diving, in swimming pools, off cliffs, in dreams. It is piquant to consider Beckett, the most hermetic figure of 20th-century literature, as a kind of prototypical bungee jumper.

But one of the joys of Knowlson's biography is to present a whole gallery of Becketts we never knew. There's Beckett the best man, for instance, at his friend Geoffrey Thompson's wedding in 1935 (he thought it would be a registry office job and was horrified to discover a full church social was planned.) There's Beckett the actor, arriving on the Trinity College stage in a long white Father Time beard in George Pelorson's *Le Kid*; Beckett the roller-skater (he was so inept, the management thought he was drunk and threw him out); Beckett the Arcadian piper, tweeting on a rusty tin whistle in Paris; Beckett the artist's model, embarrassedly posing for "a lot of bloody virgin squaws" in Hamburg; Beckett the aspirant film director, writing to Sergei Eisenstein asking for a job at Moscow's State Institute of Cinematography.

And there's Beckett the ladies' man. Though far from an obvious Romeo – catatonically shy, mortifyingly silent – he managed to draw to his angular side an extraordinary number of high-spirited and independent women with whom he would fall hopelessly in love, spend uncountable hours agonising about whether to have sex with them, and leave them bewildered. He usually spelt disaster: Joyce's daughter Lucia fell in love with him and, when politely rejected, went mad; his sexy cousin Peggy died of consumption; his favourite co-student, Ethna MacCarthy, nearly died when Beckett crashed his car into a bridge. An obsessed Peggy Guggenheim wrote ominously in her diary, "I love being with him. It is more and more my real life. I have decided now to give up everything else even sex if necessary and concentrate on him". It's characteristic that, when he met Suzanne Deschavaux-Dumesnil, the best he could say about her was, "As we both know that it will come to an end, there is no knowing how long it may last". It lasted 50 years.

The Becket you expect to find – solitary, tormented, epicly miserable, glacially brilliant but with a curious gift for silent friendship – is here too, every move of his 85 years exhaustively documented through 850-odd pages, every allusion in his letters, every name and character and glancing reference in the prose and plays and poetry from *Proust* to *Comment Dire*. James Knowlson, the distinguished director of the Beckett Literary Archive at Reading, has been steeped in the works and in every literary-critical posture visited on the Beckett canon in the last 20 years, and presents us here with a tremendous act of elucidation and synthesis, ballasted with hitherto unseen diaries (such as those from the lost years of art wandering in Germany in 1936-7) and underpinned by the bonus of Beckett's own plain reminiscences.

Beckett was born into a prosperous family of south Dublin Protestants, descended from Quaker land surveyors and mill owners on his mother's side and a clan of sport-fixated builders on his father's, he had a notably untraumatic childhood filled with boisterous relations, and summer holidays in a Wicklow fishing village. Beckett's mother, May, later to be his scourge and heartbreak,



Beckett: rejecting Joyce's light in favour of failure and ignorance

Photograph: Bruce Davidson/Magnum

organised dog shows for the Parish Church of Foxrock; his father, Bill, was a bluff, non-intellectual clubman and quantity surveyor, keen on brisk walks and bridge parties. The precocious schoolboy became the cricketing super-student at Trinity, went to Paris and became an acolyte and amanuensis of James Joyce – then abruptly gave up teaching, and adopted a "bursting heart" (He looked, he wrote in 1930, "like a scrofulous gargoyle"). He was a walking psychopathology lab. His friend Geoffrey Thompson said that the key to understanding him was to be found in his relationship with his mother who developed into a guilt-making termagant, chronically embarrassed by her son. But it was she who subsidised his therapy sessions in Paris and chastised him for leaving his teaching post and writing fifth.

Though he underwent two years' treatment for it, he could never explain what caused the characteristic air of bitter *welschmertz* that he carried from his youngest days. Knowlson points out that Beckett's sufferings weren't just psychological: his brand of depression made him unable to walk at times, while his constitution was chronically under siege from pleurisy, cysts, boils, septic fingers, night sweats and what he called a "bursting heart" (He looked, he wrote in 1930, "like a scrofulous gargoyle"). He was a walking psychopathology lab. His friend Geoffrey Thompson said that the key to understanding him was to be found in his relationship with his mother who developed into a guilt-making termagant, chronically embarrassed by her son. But it was she who subsidised his therapy sessions in Paris and chastised him for leaving his teaching post and writing fifth.

His reply was to travel around Europe, soaking up the cultural movements of the Thirties with such demented acquisitiveness, one is forced to wonder if the roots of his art lay, not in transcending the various movements of post-modernity, but in something simpler. "I wish we could meet and talk," he once wrote to his friend, Tom MacGreevy, "before I become inarticulate or eloquently suave". Suavity, sociability, good manners, all held a kind of horror for him – not only because they suggested a formal bogusness, but because he was no good at them, preferring art and his own intellect.

When his brother Frank got married, Beckett complained about "the awful unconscious social cynicism that knows that what the relationship comes down to in the end is gongs and tea-trolleys"; alongside this familiar attitude-striking is the cry of an excluded soul. After an evening with German artists and Russian aristocrats, he wrote: "I am always depressed and left with a sense of worthlessness at the beautifully applied energy of these people... In comparison I am utterly alone and without purpose, alone and pathologically indolent and limp and opinionless and consternated... This absurd diary with its list of pictures, serves no purpose, is only the act of an obsessive neurotic".

"This absurd diary" refers to the notebook he always kept, listing the names of works he'd seen in galleries. Knowlson takes these neurotic inscriptions very seriously, faithfully clocking up every Caspar David Friedrich or van Ruydsael landscape seen, every book read, every performance attended. The biography's energy level falls in these cut-off years. It's as much a relief to the reader as it clearly was for Beckett when the war supervenes and, shaken by Nazi censorship of his friends' "decadent" works, he elected to join in the French war effort.

Knowlson's chapters on Beckett's war – spent, first, translating for a Resistance cell in Paris, then in nervous retreat in Roussillon, in the rural Vaucluse, with his wife-to-be Suzanne and a cast of expatriates – are the best in the book, a vivid evocation of enforced simplicity and small-town rumourings, of chess and frugal meals and chat in the Escoffier cafe in the middle of a war zone.

The heart of this biography, though, is its attempt to discover "how the arrogant, disturbed, narcissistic young man of the early 30s could possibly have evolved into someone who was noted later for his extraordinary kindness, courtesy, concern, generosity and almost saintly 'good works'." Knowlson's answer is that the war and its aftermath pulled him out of his solipsistic stupor and substituted genuine feeling for metaphysical anger. Along with this came the famous "revelation" that's half-revealed in *Krapp's Last Tape*: "that the dark I have always struggled to keep under is in reality my most precious ally". This rejection of Joyce's light and inclusiveness in favour of Beckettian failure, impotence and ignorance was crucial: in he found the heart of his work, namely the Trilogy (*Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnamable*), and all the infinitely-pared texts and dramas that followed.

I'd quarrel with the title of this book (damned to fame? Beckett agonised about non-publication like the most *colatura prima donna*; he wanted an audience, if only to counter-balance his mother's disapproval) but nothing else. Its amplitude, its oceanic research and tireless intelligence, its pacing and verve and critical acuity mark it as one of the great post-war biographies. Whatever celestial or infernal zone he currently occupies, Beckett must be permitting himself a brief, wintry smile at last.

Adventures of the secret seven

John Rentoul delves into contemporary Labour history

Faces of Labour: The Inside Story by Andy McSmith, Verso, £16

All you need to know about the books you meant to read

by Gavin Griffiths

THE TALE OF GENJI (1010? - 1020?) by the Lady Murasaki Shikibu

The summit of Japanese classical literature, *Genji* details both court and political life during the Heian period (794-1192).

Plot: The Emperor loves low-born Kiritsubo. She gives birth to a son. The Emperor's jealous first wife persecutes Kiritsubo to death. The boy is made Genji, or commoner, for his own protection. Much of the novel is consumed with Genji's pursuit of women. Among his many loves are the Emperor's latest mistress and a young girl, Murasaki, whom he adopts as a daughter. Genji flirts with incest. His amatory appetite creates political difficulties. The Emperor's wives, mistresses and ministers conspire against him. Genji embraces self-exile in Suma. Here he matures. His son is subjected to a dry, academic schooling as Genji learns the value of discipline. The new Suzaku Emperor persuades Genji to marry his third daughter. Genji's child-wife Murasaki feels displaced. She dies slowly of grief, hoping for rebirth in paradise. Genji never recovers: at 52 he believes his life is finished. Abruptly the last section of the book opens with Genji's death. The rest of the book concerns Genji's grandson Nianou and friend Kaoru. They both love Ukiyuni. She is a sacrificial victim who cannot choose between her suitors. She tries to drown herself; fails, is reborn and becomes a "nun".

Theme: The Emperor's passion for Genji's low-born mother initiates the world into a cycle of sinful desire. Genji's loves bring him little happiness. Most of the

women must be content with misery.

Style: The first two-thirds is lucid and elegant with discrete twitches of irony. The Ukiyuni episodes are more impassioned.

Chief strengths: All the action takes place without chairs and in paper houses. Murasaki's world is entirely alien and makes most fantasy novels appear conventional. The modern Western reader must reappraise notions of sexuality and morality. The rituals that mask ferocious feelings find no counterpart in the European tradition.

Chief weaknesses: The book is twice as long as *War and Peace*. Rather too often, characters settle down to a minutely described cup of tea and listen to the twittering of nightingales.

What they thought of it then: Murasaki Shikibu was famed in her lifetime. Court diarists record difficulty in obtaining manuscripts of the text. By the 12th century, 'Genji' was a recognised classic.

What we think of it now: In Japan, much work in recent times has been spent on establishing a "clean" text and the correct order of chapters. Translated by Arthur Waley in 1933, the book was faintly patronised by Virginia Woolf who felt that it wasn't quite as good as Proust.

Responsible for: The Japanese literary tradition. Modern greats such as Tanizaki and Kawabata continued to explore the relationship between illicit passion and decorum.

The author of this rather eccentric collection of seven mini-biographies, of people who have featured in one way or another in the history of the Labour Party since 1979, unwisely invokes the model of Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians*. For although McSmith has a fine turn of sharp wit, the fascination of his book lies more in his attention to revealing detail. You can dip into this book at any point, and be surprised and engrossed by some of the more baroque curiosities of contemporary Labour history.

The book consists of portraits of Neil Kinnock, David Blunkett, Clare Short, Peter Mandelson and Blair. We've heard of them. However, it also includes chapters on Ted Grant, the founder of Militant, and Jim Murray, an engineering union shop steward who once tilted a crucial block vote at a Labour Party conference.

The late Mr Murray's claim to significance is particularly tenuous. His was the "swing" vote on the engineering union delegation to the 1979 conference which tilted 18-16 in favour of "mandatory reselection" of MPs. Thus Labour MPs were required to submit themselves to a selection process in between elections. It was a key demand of the left, but in fact the principle was accepted by the many of the right. Blair, for example, has always supported it.

But the book does not attempt to analyse the ideologies of the Labour Party, preferring to mock the "scientific" certainties of Militant, rather than assess why it gained such a grip on the party it infiltrated.

McSmith quotes from a letter Mandelson wrote to Charles Clarke, Kinnock's chief of staff, at the time of the Monmouth by-election campaign, which Mandelson ran in 1991. Clarke had obviously told him that he could not work for the party again until the general election. "I am presently trying to put my bruised feelings aside," wrote Mandelson. "I think I can contribute more in the same way, in a quiet, tactful, reasonable way ... I know you don't share this view."

This picture of Mandelson as a highly emotional man begs for a fuller account. No doubt we shall get one if and when Mandelson joins Blair's Cabinet. Meanwhile this is a highly readable, if somewhat arbitrary, collection which stuns unpredictable shafts of light on the background to Labour's incoherent identity on the threshold of assuming power.

demoted to overseas development spokeswoman just as his book went to press, and would therefore be less important in a Labour government than hitherto thought. Her falling out with Blair is an important episode which sheds much light on the nature of the "new Labour" beast, but could not be covered here.

Most significant, perhaps, is the chapter on Peter Mandelson, Labour's original spin doctor and Blair's closest confidant. McSmith and Mandelson do not get on, a fact which is advertised on the back cover of the book, which quotes Mandelson's view of the author: "One of the most biased, ill-informed, malicious and unpleasant journalists in Westminster".

Again, the detail is fascinating. McSmith quotes – damagingly – from a telephone conversation with Mandelson during the Labour leadership election in 1994, when McSmith was the only journalist to report Mandelson's secret role in Blair's campaign.

Mandelson pleaded with him not to mention his name: "He even suggested that if I wanted to damage him, I might prefer to write about his relationship with Gordon Brown had broken down."

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The Dr Who history of Britain

Roy Strong has a cliché for every occasion. By Felipe Fernandez-Armesto

The Story of Britain by Roy Strong, Hutchinson, £35

In the next remake of *Doctor Who*, Sir Roy Strong should get the star role. *The Story of Britain* is a trailer for his talents.

Beamed down against a backdrop of Stonehenge, he strikes a robotic pose for the back-cover photo, kitted out in the piffle of intergalactic conflict from the old BBC wardrobe: the Carnaby-cut coat and coifure, the death-ray gimp of the spectacles, Darth Vader's gloves, the Doctor's own paisley neckwear, and flying-saucer buttons recycled from Dalek armour. Inside the book, Sir Roy attempts afeat of compression worthy of the Tardis – a journey through 23 centuries in 600 glossy pages.

His treatment of the past is in the finest Time Lord tradition: infantile, episodic and starry-eyed. Like his predecessors in the role, the new Who addresses an audience of children in a squirmingly childish style. Though he calls the book "an introduction for anyone of any age", its kitsch cover and embarrassing patriotism are obviously aimed at godparents and maiden aunts in search of a safe Christmas present. Secure in the knowledge that recipients will leave it unread, Sir Roy has not bothered to write well.

"Britain is an island," he proclaims in the first four words, and the same level of originality and interest is sustained throughout. "One thing is certain," we are told in the final dazzling platitude, the present "too will pass away as yet another chapter unfolds in the unending story of Britain". There is a cliché for every crisis. "Dotted with gracious villas ... Roman Britain was to be seen hanging by a thread ... Not *Angli* but *Angeli* ... So it was that by the eighth century a new society, deeply Christian, had come into being ... Nothing was quite the same after 1066 ... The earth was flat ... A new era dawned ... Then there followed a tumultuous period ... The gauntlet was thrown down to the Pope, *Gloriana's* England ... Sands of time running out ... New middle classes ... The Industrial Revolution lay ahead ... Lady with the Lamp ... An empire on which the sun never set ... The clock could not be put back ... Their finest hour ... The tide was flowing". In the end, "Britain's declining industrial heritage came home to roost with a vengeance." Er, that's it.

There are some better moments. The banalities are interspersed with crisply reproduced pictures and some competent vignettes. The pen-portraits of Strong's

heroes show how enthusiasm can dispel indolence to produce shrewd and concise accounts of Capability Brown, for instance, and William Wilberforce. But even when the author manages to get his facts right and his prose pithy, his judgements seem weirdly warped. The chapter on the Victorian era is subtitled "The Classless Society" and we never get far, in the past as Strong sees it, from apple-cheeked aracdy.

Despite the title, this book is emphatically about English history. The Welsh and Scots appear only to be conquered, or otherwise to defer to the greatness of the Union. We need good histories of England. To other peoples, the English are a fearful crowd who have been dangerously effective in spreading their empires, their institutions, their language and their games. This gives them an irresistible claim on the world's attention: but, between "British Studies" and "European Studies", English history is being squeezed from syllabuses and shelves.

I had hoped Roy Strong would have the talent and energy to restore it to its rightful place. He is, in his own gawky characterisation, "a lower-middle-class boy who made his way upwards through hard work and scholarships to join the ranks of the professional classes who now control the destiny of this country". Years ago, he made genuinely important and insightful contributions to the rehabilitation of our history. He still has wonderful bursts of constructive *espièglerie* – seizing a pair of shears, for instance, to wrest

Plato's forms from the Prince of Wales's toga, or titillating readers of *Country Life* with well-observed evocations of Maine Coone cats. My revision for his book is the product of outraged expectations. *The Story of Britain* is a self-inflicted offence which no admirer will easily forgive. Let us hope, for his sake, that it will be quickly forgotten, or, at worst, lightly adapted into future scripts for *Doctor Who*.

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Embracing his Argentinian side

Antonia Logue welcomes a narrative master

The Story of the Night by Colm Tóibín, Picador, £15.99

War, love and South America: the novel by Andrew Lloyd Webber? Well, not quite. As far from squeaky musicals as he is from García Márquez's magic realism, Colm Tóibín in his third novel moves beyond anything he has done before: the Irish high court judge in *The Heather Blazing*, the Irish woman gathering her life together in Fifteen Spain in *The South*, his first novel.

In content, his new novel could scarcely be more different in style, however, he remains exactly the same: terse and spare, whatever the odds. *The Story of the Night* is set in Argentina in the Eighties. The narrator, Richard Garay, lives with his ageing English mother, who in turn lives in a fictional British Empire, replete with all the coarse iconography and devotion to Thatcher that comes from dotty jingoism. Richard is gay and teaches English for a living, but his daily life contains little more than casual sex with strangers and a fruitless crush on one of his pupils.

Then his mother dies, and suddenly the Falklands War arrives and departs within a matter of pages. After the war, Richard becomes involved with an American espionage couple who introduce him to all sorts of US oil-investors with a very specific political agenda: the privatisation of Argentinian oil. Suddenly he's rich, wearing suits, and being seduced – the classic American Eighties yuppie in a country raped blindfold by political corruption and savagery.

At exactly the point he chooses to embrace his Argentinian paternity, Richard evolves into both its antithesis and personification – a fact which is brought clearly

Visions from a speeding car

William Trevor's stories offer domestic nightmares stifled by good manners. Clare Boylan reports

After Rain by William Trevor, Viking, £16

When 16-year-old Milton Leeson has a vision of a saint at his family's farm in Armagh, it unleashes an unholy chain of consequence. Is the boy "away in the head", like his two brothers (one a UVF terrorist, the other a victim of Down's Syndrome)? It is scarcely relevant, for Milton is a Protestant, the son of a stalwart loyalist family who view this popish excess as a disease at the very heart of their values. The small, eccentric episode brews up into a chapter of monumental horror which forever after must be contained and guarded within the family. In typical Trevor style, the saint is not even a radiant or consoling vision, but a leanness woman with wasted features and lips dry as a bone. "Milton had the distinct impression that the woman wasn't alive."

With his ninth short story collection, William Trevor shows himself as a master of domestic horror. In his fictional world, the anguished cry of the dispossessed comes out as a suffocated sigh as in a nightmare. Emotions are stifled by manners, terror parcelled up in platitudes. The settings for his tales are homely ones, cosy with flagged kitchens or Formica counters. But home is not a safe place. Behind closed doors, people live lives of quiet happiness or despair, and within their own walls unspeakable horrors scuttle around. In "Gilbert's Mother" a woman lives with the growing certainty that her secretive son is a vicious criminal. Is he a rapist and murderer or merely an ineffectual creep terrorising his only victim? She had felt the tug of his lips on her breasts, a helpless creature then, growing into the one who controlled her, who made her isolation total. "Timothy's Birthday" brings a visit from the rough-trade boyfriend of their only son to a devoted elderly couple in a decaying Irish country house. With true Trevor subtlety, it is not the low-life youth who is sinister; he is just a



Trevor: his dialogue distils "pure truth from prevarication".

harmless petty delinquent who becomes the uneasy observer of the ruin he has brought to two innocent people. The nemesis is the gay son, poisonsously resentful of his parents' excluding love for one another.

Not all are horror tales. Some are almost-love stories, poignant studies of stifled lives briefly lit by glances of affection. "The Potato Dealer" tells of an arranged marriage between a pregnant girl and a dealer with "eyes that were small and sharp as splinters". It is a bleak bargain, paid for by the girl's uncle, without sentiment or any sexual con-

tent. When the mercenary husband is surprised by pleasure in the child that is born, he stows this happiness turtly and then watches helplessly as it is snatched away. "The Piano Tuner's Wife", tells of a blind man whose world was warmly coloured by an amiable first wife and then vandalised by a jealous successor.

Trevor is a skilled purveyor of quiet menace. No purple prose pumps up the sense of dread in "Lost Ground", the gem of this collection, and the longest of the stories. There is no melodrama, only a deadening sense of

reflected dread in the almost-sprightly account of a loyalist march on a Catholic area. "As the marchers melodiously advanced upon the blank stare of so many windows, the stride of the men acquired an extra fervour."

No diamond comes without flaws. Trevor is ill-at-ease with the street language of the young. Words like "mege", and "naif" fall slightly off-centre. Least successful are the gentler stories, in which the author's admirably controlled prose sometimes lacks exactitude and has a faded quality, like an exquisite garment washed too often. In the title story, a woman on holiday in Italy to recover from a broken love affair, has a moment of revelation which brings understanding and consolation. But the moment of light lacks the clarity to strike at the heart of the reader. "A Friendship" fails to justify the success of the revenge exacted by a pernickety husband on his unfaithful wife and her colourful girlfriend. This is tricky Jane Austen territory and the outcome of the story really hangs on power, and not love, as the author asserts. In "A Day", a woman drinks her way from despair to optimism with the fantasy that her husband's infidelity will bring a child, which she will adopt. This has strong echoes of the masterful "Access to the Children", (from an early collection) in which a divorced man, drink-soaked and shambolic, imagined that each access day will reunite the happy family that once was his. But the new story lacks the force and focus of the earlier one, lapsing into unconscious comedy as the sordid wife tries to assemble dinner.

Overall, these interludes come as a respite more than a disappointment. Trevor is a consummately elegant writer whose dialogue distils pure truth from prevarication and whose amiable prose snaps like a trap upon the mind of the lulled reader, leaving you like someone witnessing, from a speeding car, awful events that will stay with you forever.

Repo man seeks love, Belfast area

Susie Boyt reads a tale of romance and violence in the Ulster ceasefire

Eureka Street by Robert McLiam Wilson, Secker, £14.99

Scaring", "as fresh as an open wound", "it goes straight for the jugular" are how Robert McLiam Wilson's first two novels, *Ripley Boyle* and *Manfred's Pain* were described. His third, *Eureka Street*, certainly has a strong thread of violence running through it – its Ulster setting, complete with bombings and beatings ensures this – but what is most striking about it is its absolute faith in romance. "All stories are love stories" we are told at the book's beginning, a surprising first line for a tale set in Belfast in the six months leading up to the ceasefire. Yet Wilson presents a Belfast where all aspects of life are heightened, all chances must be snatched, because if terrible things can happen without a moment's warning, then per-

haps wonderful things can too. Wilson's novel has two friends as heroes and the chapters take turns in telling their overlapping stories. Jake is Catholic, handsome, vicious and acutely sentimental. Recently separated from his girlfriend Sarah, he is desperate for love. The succession of barmaids, shop workers and waitresses that catch his eye move his hungry heart to such an extent that he immediately fancies himself in love with them. Yet he never quite gets anywhere with these women, at the last moment taking great offence at something they say or fail to say, pushing them away at the very point he wants them most. This sort of delicacy is quite at odds with Jake's day job as a repossession man. Every day, he and his

thuggish co-workers raid the grim estates of Belfast in the early morning when people's resistance is at its lowest.

Jake's fat and ugly protestant friend Chuckie Lurgan's life turns around when he meets a beautiful, rich American girl. Realising she's the kind of girl you need money for, he pulls off a huge mail-order dildo scam, invests the proceeds in even less reputable ventures and suddenly finds himself a rich man.

The book follows the progress of these two men and their small circle: foul-mouthed twelve year old Roche, Lurgan's mother who scandalises the whole of Belfast by taking up with the woman over the road; Septic Ted, Slat, Sloan and Lurgan's business partner who works his

way through all the girls in Belfast.

Wilson is at his least effective when he abandons this easy-going anecdotal style for something more poetic, a kind of heightened language in which a voice, both knowing and striving for answers, addresses the reader directly about what Belfast is and what it means. Wilson is so good at showing us things, such a natural story teller, that when he comes straight out and states what he thinks, it sounds weak and unsubtle. But this is only a small complaint. *Eureka Street* is a clever and witty book by a writer whose real talent is an ability to combine blind optimism and complete despair with a remarkable ease, as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world to do so.

GRAHAM JOYCE THE TOOTH FAIRY

It was as if a third force had entered the room. First there was him, and then there was the Tooth Fairy, and then she'd undressed and unleashed into the room this ravenous power, this insatiable maw; and he understood for the first time that one's initial impression of the locus of a person residing in their face, their eyes, their talking mouth was childish and staggeringly incorrect, that a brute third force was guiding and misguiding them. Voracious carnality lived and fed and thrived in the shadows, under the water. The insight tolled in him like a bell, and it made him afraid. He was paralysed by the vulgarity of the truth, but he understood dimly that what he was afraid of was life itself.



IAIN BANKS
on THE TOOTH FAIRY

"A deft, funny novel about growing up cumbersomely disguised as a dark and highly readable fairy story, a modern parable of loss and maturity."

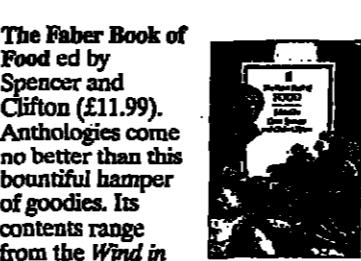
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Paperbacks

Reviewed by Emma Hagestadt and Christopher Hirst



The Faber Book of Food ed by Spencer and Clifton (£11.99). Anthologies come no better than this bountiful hamper of goodies. Its contents range from the *Wind in the Willows* picnic to Keith Tatten's "napalm sauce" in *London Fields*. Coward on Christmas dinner in Jamaica, Waugh on an Ethiopian banquet and J K Jerome or Irish stew ("We had a discussion as to whether the rat should go in or not"). The section on "Killing for the Kitchen" should be avoided before meals.

Schliemann of Troy: Treasure and Deceit by David Trail (Penguin, £8.99). A self-made tycoon who took up archaeology in his mid-forties to satisfy a life-long obsession with Homeric Troy, Heinrich Schliemann achieved worldwide celebrity through his amazing discoveries. Yet almost every aspect of his life was fissured by falsehoods.

Trail puts it down in part to showmanship: "an uncanny sense of what the public wanted to hear and an ability to satisfy that demand". In the end Schliemann's achievements are undeniable and his life-story is made all the more fascinating by his failings.

Muggeridge: The Biography by Richard Ingrams (HarperCollins, £7.99). Pithy and revealing, Ingrams has produced an entertaining portrait of this restless, wispish

talent. Muggeridge was as fearless in his sexual adventures (nickname: "The Pouncer") as in his journalism. Ingrams treats his subject's late-flowering evangelism kindly – but describes one outburst as "more than hypocritical" – and writes movingly about his "laughter, unfailing kindness and generosity". Another fine life of Muggeridge by Gregory Wolfe (Hodder, £9.99) gives far more details but lacks Ingrams's insights.

Who Goes Home by Roy Hattersley (Warner, £6.99). What a curious fellow R Hattersley is. So

ponderous on the opposition front bench and prone to pouting vast, unpickable novels like *The Maker's Mark* and *In That Quiet Earth*, yet these political reminiscences are lively, gossipy and packed with hilarious set-pieces. It is impossible not to warm to a man who comments that a ceramic phallus sent through the post must have come from a Tory, "for left-wingers usually chose to associate me with female genitalia."

The Missing by Andrew O'Hagan (Picador, £5.99). Why is it that the working classes don't pass down their family history like everyone else? In a stunning series of essays, Andrew O'Hagan delves into his own family's sketchy Glaswegian past and reflects how easy it is, and has always been, for people to "disappear". With nearly 25,000 "Misers" currently on police files, the book ends with a compelling account of Fred West's first marriage and his early career.

cruising the Bridgeton area of Glasgow in a Mr Whippy van. One of the best non-fiction reads of the year.

The Bronski House by Philip Marsden (Flamingo, £6.99). The farthest travel writer Philip Marsden ever got as a boy was Cornwall. But he always had a good idea of what "abroad" was like from visits to Zofia's house – an aristocratic Pole with a fund of tales of snow-laden forests, howling wolves and cheeses as big as cushions. As an adult, Marsden pieces together Zofia's story from family memoirs and diaries. Part *Dr Zhivago*, part travelogue, his book tells of a family whose lives were twice torn apart by revolution and war.

The Remarkable Journey of Miss Trany Quirke by Elizabeth Ridley (Virago, £9.99). Turn-of-the-century Camberwell is the setting for this compelling lesbian romance. Aware from an early age of her "inverted" sexual nature, Trany Quirke has devoted her life to teaching and the suffragette cause. But when approached by a beautiful young woman for advice on the married state, it's not long before Miss Quirke's petticoats join the tea-cups by the fire. A gas-lit melodrama that wears its learning, and its strangeness, lightly. Jeanette Winterson for beginners.



Binding a genius with woolly strands

Lucy Hughes-Hallett reads the life of a woman of no substance

Emily Tennyson: The Poet's Wife by Ann Thwaite, Faber, £25

In 1855 Emily Tennyson remarked to the sculptor Thomas Woolner, who had designed a medallion bearing her portrait, that she had better "take to poisoning" to ensure good sales for him. Serial killers were ever-popular but few people, she guessed, would wish to buy an image of a poet's wife. Equally few, I imagine, will want to read her biography.

Ann Thwaite presents no compelling reason why we should do so. A pity, because this is in many ways an admirable book. Thwaite writes elegantly and marshals her enormous cast of Tennysons, hangers-on, friends, admirers, servants and correspondents with marvellous tact, ensuring that we get to know well those whom we need to know, and allowing others to fade discreetly away after making their contribution. She has a nice ironic wit which allows her to be simultaneously sceptical and affectionate in recording the variously wayward, pompous or venial goings-on of her subject's spouse, siblings, siblings-in-law and other relations and friends (never though of Emily herself: Emily is too good to require such treatment). Best of all she is able to write about love with a sympathetic energy that suffuses her book with emotional warmth. It is the story of a happy marriage (*pace* Edward Lear, who wrote that no one but his beloved friend Emily could have put up with Alfred Tennyson for more than a month.) It is also, most markedly and delightfully, the account of a mother's required love for her children, a theme unaccountably rare in biography and about which Thwaite writes with tenderness and eloquence.

For all that, though, the book has a hollow centre. Emily, so fine, so gentle, so intelligent, so unassertive, remains shadowy. Thwaite is determined to rescue her reputation from those who have portrayed her either as an ineffectual invalid or as a conventional and excessively domestic woman who tamed and neutered Tennyson's genius, binding it, as Harold Nicolson put it, "with little worsted strands". Thwaite (poet's wife herself) demonstrates how energetic and hard-working Emily really was, combining the roles (each of which would now be considered a stimulating and fulfilling one for a professional person of either sex) of a great author's

tutor, not to mention doing the arduous job of being his wife (ie housekeeper, hostess, counsellor, lover, and apologist to those he offended).

Her father, who had no sons, had given his daughters a boy's education. True, Emily, whose mysterious "ill-health" Thwaite guesses to have been caused by an unmentionable prolapse of the uterus, lay on a sofa, but while recumbent she wasn't doing anything fiddly with little bits of worsted; she was reading the works of Dante, Goethe and Virgil in the languages in which they were written. But though Thwaite demonstrates conclusively that there was more to Emily than has previously been allowed, she cannot build her up into a person worthy of the enormous amount of devoted attention Thwaite herself has given her, or even that Thwaite requires of her readers. For all her hard work and wide reading, Emily Tennyson is still the person of whose conversation Coventry Patmore could remember nothing except the words "Won't you stay to dinner?"

Her marriage to Tennyson was the great event of Emily's life: its long deferment her biographer's greatest difficulty. Thwaite quotes a letter from Alfred, one of the few to escape their son's censorship, written just before their correspondence was broken off for nearly ten years. It makes clear that Emily's later suggestion that lack of money kept them apart was misleading, probably deliberately so. "I fly thee for my good, perhaps for thine," he wrote. It seems he was as little capable of making up his mind to marry as he was of organising a holiday for himself. ("You will find him heavy to carry" wrote his friend William Brookfield to Ralph Waldo Emerson, who was contemplating a jaunt to France with him.) It was Emily who first declared her love (he wrote thanking her for taking an initiative for which he would not have had the courage), and probably Emily who first proposed. But though Thwaite does surely all that could be done to make sense of their agonisingly protracted courtship, it remains obscure. With commendable honesty she admits "we know very little"; but that doesn't prevent her writing rather a lot, padding out the poorly-documented years of Emily's unmarried life with information of mind-boggling triviality and irrelevance (for



"Hardly enough of self in her to keep herself alive": Emily and Alfred Tennyson with their sons Hallam and Lionel in 1863

Photograph: The Reading Museum

instance that in 1813 her father contributed three guineas towards the foundation of a village school.)

Emily once wrote fondly to Lear that his long silences allowed her to be as much at ease with him as with "my old friends, the empty room, or the sofa in the corner." It appears that her husband felt much the same way about her, composing freely while she sat across from the hearth

from him, entirely undemanding. As Benjamin Jowett said, she had "hardly enough of self in her to keep herself alive." She certainly hasn't enough to keep alive this very long book. Repeatedly I found myself relieved by the entrance of some other person - Julia Margaret Cameron trailling across the lawn in her red and purple robes. Emily's sister, poor mad Louisa, scribbling cryptic notes of furious self-disgust in

her journal, little Hallam solemnly and hilariously recording in his diary his father's tantrums in continental hotels - anything to vary the tranquil monotony of Emily's company. Thwaite shrewdly remarks of Emily's sister-in-law, Matilda Tennyson, "she was it seems a 'character' and characters can be difficult to live with". True, but a character is a biographer's first requirement.

The bishop who burbled into trouble

Should Lambeth Palace's most attractive tenant have split the beans? Michael de la Noy isn't convinced

Robert Runcie: The Reluctant Archbishop by Humphrey Carpenter, Hodder, £20

This is not the biography Lord Runcie wanted, but a man who "burbles for background" (his own words) into a tape recorder on the motorway, while being chauffeured by his Boswell, and then complains that his words have been "reproduced for substance", is not in a very strong position to object. The last thing a biographer wants is "background" (whatever that is) which he cannot use. The result of this ultimately unhappy collaboration is an exercise in journalism, with endless verbatim conversations where paraphrase is called for, and a lot of extraneous information.

I have read and admired Carpenter's life of Auden, and his evocation of Evelyn Waugh and his chums, *The Brideshead Generation*, so I was not prepared for a tour of Lambeth Palace that might just past muster from the pen of a trainee reporter on the *Penge Gazette*. "An old-fashioned bell-pull summoned a friendly porter, who directed me under an arch into a big quadrangle... "The big door" was open, and inside "rose a big, ceremonial staircase." But then everything at Lambeth Palace seems to have been on a scale

to stun Mr Carpenter. He was taken into "a big drawing room" with "big windows." Amazingly enough, they "looked on to the garden."

Runcie's "burbles" about poor Lady Di being an actress and a schemer, and the heir to the throne having given up on the Church of England, seems somehow less sensational between hard covers than they did on the front page of the *Times* who paid Mr Carpenter £75,000 Runcie's breaches of confidence. But perhaps familiarity has bred contempt. After we have all passed our moral judgements about former archbishops who burble, what matters now is whether Runcie's tenure of office and his personality have been fairly and adequately dealt with.

As far as Runcie the man is concerned, I think they have. When invited to go to Canterbury, Temple, Fisher, Ramsey and Coggan did not hesitate for any shorter time than was seemly. Carey positively jumped at it. But in 1980, with no other serious contender in sight, Robert Runcie, then bishop of St Albans, made the Establishment hold its breath while he agonised for six weeks over his decision, partly because he regarded

himself as overrated by other people.

This makes him, always excepting William Temple, the most attractive successor to St Augustine this century. And, unsatisfactory though he finds this, his fourth, biography, he emerges from it as worldly and sophisticated, modest, amusing, without pomposity and, though a bit of a chameleon, essentially honest.

On the chameleon front, Carpenter could have probed more deeply into Runcie's ambiguous attitude towards homosexuality. In a notorious speech in the General Synod, not mentioned in the book, he once described homosexuals as emotional cripples. And what did he mean when he told Carpenter he had always been conscious that homosexuals might stab him in the back because he wasn't one of them?

Runcie's years at Canterbury were full of drama, and it is the sheer emotional impact of the visit of the Pope, the bloody split over women priests, the controversy about the Charismatic Movement (not referred to at all) that lie buried beneath these piles of tapes. But nuggets do emerge: a letter from the Queen's private sec-

retary congratulating Runcie on his controversial Falkland Islands sermon; and Runcie's bizarre hope that the Pope would agree to attend a Eucharist in Canterbury Cathedral.

While Runcie was archbishop, two major disasters occurred: the capture of Terry Waite and the suicide of Gareth Bennett. Carpenter lets Runcie off the hook over his amazing lack of control of his staff, allowing Waite to rush in where any angel with a grain of common sense would have headed the advice of the Foreign Office. But in the chapter dealing with the *Crockford's* Preface scandal and the death of Mr Bennett, Carpenter has researched well, filling in much previously missing information.

Although Carpenter thinks the MC is a medal (it is a decoration), and appears not to realise that Cyril Eastham ended up as bishop of Peterborough, his book is factually very reliable, and full of Runcie gems. How could one not forgive a lot of a man who found C.S. Lewis "too good to be true", describes John Selwyn Gummer as a religious know-all and the Rt Hon. Baroness Thatcher, LG, OM as "The Hacksaw"?



Who's reading whom

Jonathan Raban finds a soap-opera to run and run in the OJ Simpson trial

Fame, fame, fame dominated the OJ Simpson case, although the majority of Americans still think the issue was race. Jeffrey Toobin's *The Run of His Life* (Random House US) shows the legal process played second fiddle to the cult of celebrity and that everyone connected with the trial - judge, jury, defence, prosecution, witnesses - were consumed by the desire to be famous. There is a brilliant description of Toobin visiting Judge Ito in his chambers. After some small talk Ito leaned conspiratorially towards Toobin. "Do you want to see something great?" he said. "Really great?" The "great" was nothing more than a letter from America's premier black talk-show host, but Ito was in raptures.



Death is Now My Neighbour
read by Kevin Whately

The Pilgrim's Progress
read by David Suchet

Kevin Whately reads Colin Dexter's latest Oxford thriller *Death is Now My Neighbour* (Macmillan, 3 hrs, £7.99), with a remarkably good take-off of John Thaw, and naturally makes a perfect Sergeant Lewis. Plenty of red herrings, bitching done and cryptic clues.

What better tape for Chief Inspector Endeavour Morse's Jaguar than his childhood hero Munro's *Pilgrim's Progress* (Penguin, 3 hrs, £7.99). David Suchet vaults in a breath from engagingly bucolic Christian to Mr Wordy-Wiseman's weary cynicism and the dread Apollyon's sibilantly evil hiss. Singing language and a quote a minute. Avoid other versions.

Christina Hardyment

Come back, Hob Hound of Edgley, all is forgiven

Sue Gaisford reads two warring accounts of radio's favourite agri-feminist soap

The Archers: The True Story by William Smethurst, Michael O'Mara, £16.99

The Archers: The Changing Face of Radio's Longest Running Drama by Vanessa Whitburn, Virgin, £14.99

We've had murder and suicide, rape and armed robbery; we've had incest and insanity; we've had Alzheimer's and adultery. No, really, we have, in our own isolated rural backwater. Our village shop, our bus service and even our pub have closed down and we seldom bump into our neighbours because we're always in cars. In comparison with this reality, Ambridge, for all its dramas, can sometimes seem like an idyll of gentle harmony, an impossible dream of peaceful co-existence.

William Smethurst would not agree. He worked on *The Archers* for 11 years, leaving it in 1986 to preside over the death of *Crossroads*. His history of Ambridge, *The Archers - The True Story* culminates in a furious denunciation of its current "mixture of violence, melodrama and sensation... a ferment of greed, sexual passion, family discord, racial hatred and rampant, radical feminism". And he doesn't stop there. He condemns many of its early writers, editors and story-lines in similarly savage terms and declares

that "Only during the Eighties" - when he was in charge - "was the programme different, attempting to engage listeners' interests".

And how did he do that? He thrilled them with stories of the ghostly Hob Hound of Edgley, Nigel and Lizzie's love life, and the saga of the Over-Sixties' missing tea money. Incidentally, he doesn't dwell on the other dramatic device with which his name is often associated, the story of the giant, exploding marrow.

There is precious little affection in this work.

It is written in short, jerky chapters that bear a strange resemblance to familiar 15-minute episodes; they are full of jumbled stories and often end with portentous, mini cliff-hangers. "After Jennifer's Baby would come the story of What Happened to Jennifer's Baby" is one.

The most telling of these ends chapter 34.

Underneath a rather scary photograph of himself he tells of the brief appearance and ignominious dismissal of an Ambridge character created after he left, whose name resembled his

own. This man "departed Ambridge, muttering and swearing, and was heard of no more".

The main problem is that, however much he mutters and swears, Smethurst has not decided whether or not any of it really matters. Is it just a radio programme, or is it a sacred icon? Will people listen if it remains harmless, genial and bucolic, or must it develop and reflect more accurately the preoccupations of real Nineties countryfolk? Should we - does he - really care? He pours scorn on what he claims was Gwen Berryman's delusion that she was in fact Dorni Archer but, in the next breath, expresses outrage at the fact that Ruth Patterson, a subsequent editor, dared to kill off a lovable individual he had himself introduced - Jack Wooley's elderly butler, Captain.

In a way, you can't blame him. Half the nation seems to believe they all exist. Letters, telegrams, bouquets pour in to the characters at times of crisis, and in the Seventies, a deluded graffiti artist was moved to denounce the Archer granary

on a wall in North London, with the words "Doris Archer is a Prude". Vanessa Whitburn's book,

The Archers - The Changing Face of Radio's Longest Running Drama has a firmer grip on reality. She covers much of the same ground, though more sketchily, and includes pages of photographs and brief biographies of the actors as themselves, as well as in character.

This is a book for fans, glossy and accessible. Whitburn, prima target of Smethurst's scorn, is generous to him, praising him for the splendid social comedy he brought into the series, but she is also certain that stories need to be continually updated and new elements introduced. She aims "to provide a rich mix of agriculture, humour and strong emotional complexity, and a good many listeners think she is doing pretty well. True, there are a lot of powerful women in Ambridge these days, but then we are all entitled to our dreams. Besides, some of us remember the late-lamented Aunt Laura, and they've never come tougher than her.

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nirhopping

The thing about...

Zippo lighters

One of the bits of wisdom disseminated by those advising smokers on how to give up is to throw away all the accoutrements of the weed. Ditch the nacre-covered party case, heave that art deco holder, turn the ashtray into peanut bowls, sling that tiny silver spoon on a chain - whoops, wrong habit. If you're going to prove your determination, they all have to go.

There is one thing, though, that anybody would be a fool to throw out. No well-equipped handbag is complete without a Zippo lighter. Non-smokers may bask in the warmth of their own smugness, but we suds can bask in the warmth of something more practical: our own bonfire. There are few greater pleasures than refusing to lend someone your lighter.

Zippo, the windproof, rainproof fire-maker with the distinctive opening clunk, was reproduced for the 300 millionth time in April; next year will be its 60th year in production. They have the same iconic status as the Harley Davidson. Visitors to Vietnam come home with handfuls of them, purchased from little boys on the street and most of them bearing battle scars. So many of these change hands that you wonder how the GIs had room for any weapons.

The Zippo has long been a collectible, and its manufacturers have been catering to that market with annual new editions. Like Swatch, however, the knowledge that people will buy anything for an investment seems to have gone to their heads. This year's edition features a set of Pin-up girls. There are five: a Pinup of the Year called Joan from Chicago (The Windy City - geddit?) and four scantly-clad lovelies representing the four seasons.

The girl question - atomic bosoms, and acres of lightly tanned flesh, go by the names of April, Sommer, Ida Redd and Holly. Holly perches on a big green Christmas bauble, Ida Redd bends over a barrel of apples in hot pants and cowboy boots; April's furled umbrella points delicately to her crotch. Sommer, meanwhile sits in a swimsuit on an enormous lighted Fourth of July rocket, the sort of symbolism that has long been the subject of pastiche. A shame. Simple they may be, but Zippos have a timeless perfection that transcends fad. These specimens are about as collectible as Tennant's Lager cans.

Serena Mackesy

A brighter future for Modern British?

John Windsor previews October's auctions and art fairs.

Buy only what you like" is the favourite platitude of auctioneers and dealers. But investors say: "Never mind what you like, buy what everybody else is buying!" You might, for example, think that Mary Little's armchair "Liz", in Bonhams' 20th century design sale next Saturday (2pm), is hideous. Such lots fox the scruffy yuppies who pack design sales at Bonhams - and rivals Christie's South Kensington and Sotheby's - where they baulk at buying unfamiliar names.

So why blow an estimated £2,200-£2,600 on a Mary Little tubular steel armchair with rude-looking mobile armrest, dressed in baggy blue silk drawers? For a start, because the V&A and the Crafts Council have each bought one. The rest of the six in her "Coat of Arms Collection" (1993-4) have been snapped up by private collectors. This is the only one left - direct from studio and the first Little to appear at auction.

Who Mary Little? An Eighties RCA graduate with a Nineties punch. Continental public collections bought her "blue chair". The Coat of Arms chairs were splashed in Design Week and on the cover of Blueprint. They were sold by the trendy Galerie Valerie in London.

Coat of Arms retail prices have been between £1,500 and £4,500 (designs vary), so Bonhams' estimate seems reasonable. But newspaper publicity can inflate prices! Next time, buy a catalogue, do some research - and keep mum.

Sotheby's modern design sale is on Tuesday 29 October (2.30pm).

More discerning scruffy yuppies - the sort that are colonising Clerkenwell - have been bidding bullish at Sotheby's sales of Modern Brit pictures. They are in their thirties. He might be a photographer or designer, a couple might comprise a down-dressing city type with arty wife who nudges him to bid more.



This is good news for Modern Brits, a frustrating auction market for investors that has shown occasional signs of life over the past few years, only to prove tame and again that the Brits will not buy even their own art.

On the catalogue cover for Sotheby's Modern Brit sale on Wednesday (10.30am), the auctioneers have placed a lure for the new buyers that is an instructive guide to their taste - a chalk and crayon drawing of 1943 of a poet under a willow by the Neo-Romantic John

Craxton, est £4,000-£6,000. Figurative - not abstract. Sophisticated, spirited figuratives are what they want. They would buy expensive Neo-Romantic Piper and Sutherland if they could.

At Sotheby's in March, private buyers competed for Mick Rooney's dream-like oil of a cafe scene, "Too Much on Her Plate" (1982), which fetched £16,100, just below top estimate. In June, a sophisticated, Braque-like William Scott still life of 1948 was bid to £60,000 by privateers before the trade upped the price to £89,500.

Not much Neo-Romanticism at the 20th Century British Art Fair - at the RCA, Kensington Gore, west London until tomorrow (11am-7pm) - but the English abstract landscapist Ivon Hitchens seem to be everywhere. The fair has its first photograph dealer, Michael Hoppen.

Outsiders are in. The first collection at auction of Outsider Art is at

Poet and Willow by John Craxton

Sotheby's on Thursday 24 October (2pm). Outsider art implies the visionary, obsessively dense pictures by untaught recluses and lunatics brought to light by the French contemporary artist Jean Dubuffet in 1945. The Continentals and Americans have been into it for years, but here, until this year, it has been the preserve of a small coterie of cognoscenti almost as obsessive as the artists whose work they winkle out of psychiatric wards or back-street hotels with drawn curtains.

Sotheby's has 170 works collected by the big Berlin dealer Michael Haas, including a crayon and pencil drawing by Dubuffet's first discovery, the child molester Adolf Wölfli, est £5,000-£6,000. The sale is expected to raise £3m. The London dealer Jane England of Westbourne Grove, west London, a major champion of Outsider Art, has a selling exhibition of mainly British works, 15-26 October. For a Who's Who of Outsiders, consult John Maizels' book *Raw Creation*, published this year by Phaidon.

One-off: Eton College is turning out its old fossils - on-site sale of contents of its natural history museum by Bonhams, Wednesday 23 October (11am). Doggies for sale: 308-lot closing-down charity sale of dog paintings from Sara Davenport's unique London dog-art gallery - Bonhams, Thursday 10 October (6pm).

Bottom line: One of 90 cans of Piero Manzoni's *Merde d'Artiste* (1961), catalogued as "artist's faeces in metal tin", is est £15,000-£20,000 in Christie's contemporary art sale on 24 October (11am). They are virtually unknown at auction. Sotheby's failed to sell one at £30,000-£40,000 in London in 1990. Manzoni's unadulterated individuality is taken seriously in Italy. The turd seems likely to be repatriated.

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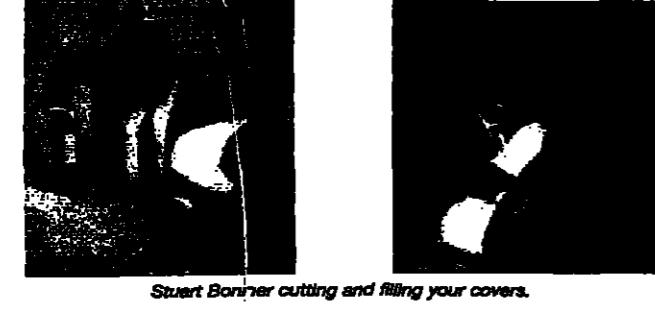
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Stand back Karan, Lauren and Klein

Tommy Hilfiger's fashion appeals to both preppy New Yorkers and black urban rappers. Prince Charles and Snoop Doggy Dogg have Tommy in common. Today his collection arrives at the Royal Albert Hall By Edward Helmore



The world of the American fashion designer Tommy Hilfiger will be unveiled in a catwalk show at the Royal Albert Hall in London today but it will matter little if the audience likes it or not - Tommy Hilfiger's push for our hearts and minds will not be fought on the pages of *Vogue* but on the pavements and in the clubs. If Hilfiger's lifestyle conquest of Europe goes according to plan, as it probably will given the mechanical precision of his US operation, we will soon be living in a red, white and blue Tommisphere, working in and working out in Tommy wear, snoozing in Tommy sleepwear and smelling of apple pie care of Tommy: The New American Fragrance.

Forty-four-year-old Hilfiger is the current success story of American fashion. Since 1992 the company has grown into Wall Street's favourite frock stock and last year it turned over \$480m, buffeting the established heavyweights of Donna Karan, Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein.

But unlike his competitors, what Hilfiger offers is not so much the clever re-modelling of European fashion in the name of ease and lifestyle, but a brand of hip, affordable "urban prep" derived from the melting pot of American life. Whether we are ready for Tommy Hilfiger's brand of "classics with a twist" depends on how far we are willing to be seduced by the heavily branded style of casualwear and its attendant images of wholesome fun and promises of popularity. The name already signifies the height of cool among black club kids and though Hilfiger's genuine brand clothes are not yet available, counterfeit merchandise is in high demand.

In an inconspicuous building in midtown Manhattan, Tommy Hilfiger employees move purposefully from room to room as his assistant - one of eight - greets visitors profusely. "We're very excited, to be honest, very excited," she says, bearing gifts of the new Tommy fragrance and a *10 Years of Tommy* promotional video.

Soon enough Tommy himself glides over, projecting the kind of friendly ease that is simultaneously winning and alarming. Slightly built, he is fresh-faced and clean-cut as an all-American boy could be. From his page-boy haircut and whiter-than-white caps of his tombstone teeth, his open white shirt and blue chinos to his shiny black penny loafers, he is put together in precisely the look that has taken America by storm.

Not surprisingly, his spacious office is spotless and filled with the paraphernalia of a boy's own dream - NFL football helmets, antique military regalia. Behind his desk hang huge photographs of Mick Jagger and John Lennon; on one wall is a set of splashy paintings by David Bowie; signed guitars from Ron Wood and Steve Winwood take pride of place alongside one another. Tommy sits behind an imposing oak desk, swivelling in his raised chair and looking down upon visitors who sink helplessly into the huge chairs opposite. He looks like a cross between Captain Scarlet and the Cheshire Cat.

What makes Tommy tick is not easy to tell by meeting the man. Tommy's tick, such as it is, is an enveloping all-American corporate ethos, expressed in the third person, channelled with an unbreaking gaze and illustrated with hand gestures.

"Tommy is classic but updated, modern, athletic, functional, accessible. It is bright, fun and full of life and spirit," he says. He could be talking about himself. "We develop themes around our groups - snowboarding, surfing, along with sailing gear, baseball. And we also contribute to my fondness of English sports. We do a cricket group."

Cricket? In America? "Well, it's really tennis-golf but we call it cricket because maybe we use more cricket-type colours."

It's soon clear that whatever line one takes - gentle banter, direct questions - the result is the same. Tommy is a walking, talking press release. His delivery is classic image projection that makes the head spin and the heart sink. Project the image, points one, two, three. Project the image, project the...

"We believe we have a world class product ... we've done it in a different way ... it's incredibly high quality and great style but American style that translates into global style at affordable price points ... accessible to the world."

Tommy's professionalism even runs to memorising a "face book", a kind of corporate *Who's Who*, so that he can greet every employee in each of his 840 outlets by name on his frequent in-store promotional tours through the malls of America.

Wherever he goes he is treated like one of his rockstar heroes and is shadowed by a private security detail. He obvi-

ously enjoys the attention and knows the value of keeping in touch with his customers; an aide always trails him with signed photographs for Tommy to give to his fans.

There is little to suggest that there is much to uncover about Tommy, what you see is what you get. "There's just nothing incredibly mysterious," he says somewhat apologetically. "In fact, I'm more normal than people would like. They might like something more juicy or interesting with my background or my life. But I am who I am."

To many he is a relentless self-promoter who provides a corporate face for his corporate name - which, in a Faustian but not uncommon pact in the fashion business, is owned by his backer, the Hong Kong-based textile magnate, Silas Chou. In exchange, Hilfiger owns 22.5 per cent of the company (valued at \$100m) and enjoys an annual salary of \$6m. For that he must maintain appearances and avoid controversy.

He gives to charity, he uses his Gulfstream II jet for business only, he likes fishing, cycling, skiing, wide open spaces, his house on Mustique. He lives with his wife of 16 years, Susie, and their four children in a 22-room colonial farm-house in Greenwich, Connecticut, decorated by Colefax & Fowler.

In fact, all one can know about Tommy is already on the promotional video that cuts between film of Tommy aged four and Tommy now, discussing what it was like then.

We learn that he grew up in Elmira, a small town in upstate New York, as one of nine children. That in 1969 he started his first business, a chain of upstate New York hippie boutiques called People's Place, with just \$150 and 20 pairs of denim bell-bottoms. Having opened 10 stores by 1977, the company hit hard times and Hilfiger was bankrupted.

He then switched from retailer to freelance designer before forming a partnership with Mohan Murjani, an Indian investor, and launching his first cheeky assault on the orthodoxy of American fashion by pitching himself as a younger Ralph Lauren. Before bailing out of that deal in 1988, he opened an unremarkable and short-lived shop on South Molton Street.

Sartorially at least, Tommy Hilfiger has something for everyone. He counts among his custom the presidential celebrity of Bill Clinton (who wears his ties). Snoop Doggy

Dogg (who favours the extra-large streetwear), Prince Charles (whose framed letter of appreciation for a delivery of freebies is in Tommy's office), Fergie (who likes to fly in his jet), singer Björk and rockers Metallica.

Though no one knows why Tommy's bold logos have become totems of black urban cool, he's now cashing in on an invaluable cultural cachet for all it's worth and has enlisted producer Quincy Jones's daughter and rap impre-sario Russell Simmons to help keep rappers coming his way.

Rapper Q-Tip even included him in a song. "Tommy Hilfiger is my nigga and others couldn't figure how an Hilfiger used to move through with vigga." High praise for a suburban white boy who presents himself as a regular guy designing for other regular guys and soon, girls.

As the self-described antithesis to the Parisian catwalk designers, he does not seek the mercurial "moments" so beloved by the fashion pack and, as a result, has suffered the silent treatment that is their preferred signal of disapproval.

Last year, in what was perceived as a tacit rebuke, the Council of Fashion Designers of America refused to give any award in the men's category at their annual awards ceremony. Though he was awarded Menswear Designer of the Year in January this year, he remains a subversive to the industry - no heroin chic, no jumping on fads, just consistent development of signature lines.

"There is the trendy fashion business that has to do with people being in business one minute and out the next and I'm not in that race to see who can be funkier or more eccentrically creative," he says. "I choose to think we are running an apparel business run on a combination of product, marketing, placement, strategy and profitability."

Despite the snippy - probably jealous - reaction of fashion's elite, Hilfiger understands the business as one of margins and volume, and gives his customers what they want, not what he thinks they should want.

Perhaps this is a failure of imagination, but as other more modish fashion sales have slipped his have risen. So when the crowds pour out of the show today they may, against their better judgment, have seen the future. Tommy's radar is, as he says, "in tune". When his first store opens in Harvey Nichols early next year the customer will be able to decide.

Lunch for £5, Dinner for £10

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Poissons

or

Plats Chauds

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the bone

or

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Caramelised Oranges,

Cinnamon Ice Cream

or

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Cream, Butterscotch Sauce

£10 Dinner

Hors d'Oeuvres

Soupe de Poissons

Mediterranean Fish Soup with

Croutons, Roastie and Grilled

Pepper

or

Terrine Maison

Pâté of Chicken Liver flavoured with

Mustard, Served with Bread

Plats Chauds

Bœuf Bourguignon

Beef Bourguignon

or

Grilled Salmon with

Mustard, Peas and Potatoes

Desserts

Oranges Caramélisées

Caramelised Oranges,

Cinnamon Ice Cream

or

Profiterole Suzet Caramel

Profiteroles filled with Vanilla Ice

Cream, Butterscotch Sauce

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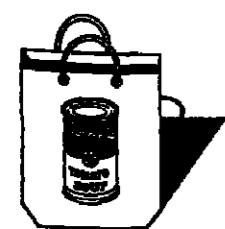
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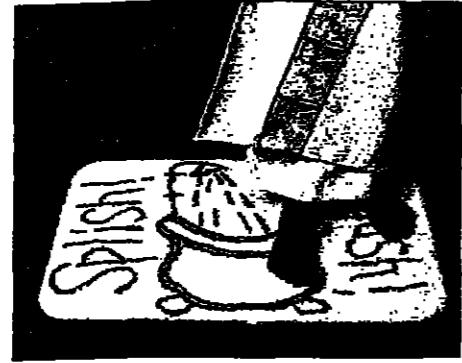
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What is it? Shop selling glamorous furniture, home furnishings, artefacts and jewellery from North India, Pakistan and Morocco, 90 per cent of which is hand-picked by the owners. It also has a mail-order service for bed-spreads, duvets, tablecloths and napkins in hand-block-print fabrics (tel: 01285 652175).

The shop's stock? Handsome one-off furniture: tables in dark (reclaimed) wood (from £75), and iron cupboards (from £45) in colours like banana-frond green. Also Afghani kelims (£45), decorative Moroccan vases with Islamic patterns (from £21) and framed Nepalese Tantric watercolours (£25). Other items include copper lamps (from £29), silk cushions in a vast selection of colours (£12.25 each) and pottery door knobs in dusty turquoise and pink (£5.50 each). Kitsch-lovers are catered for with showy Hollywood-actress style earrings (£4.50) and neon-bright postcards of Indian deities (20p each).

Who shops there? Everyone, apparently, from Gloucestershire's squires to local yurt-dwelling hippies.

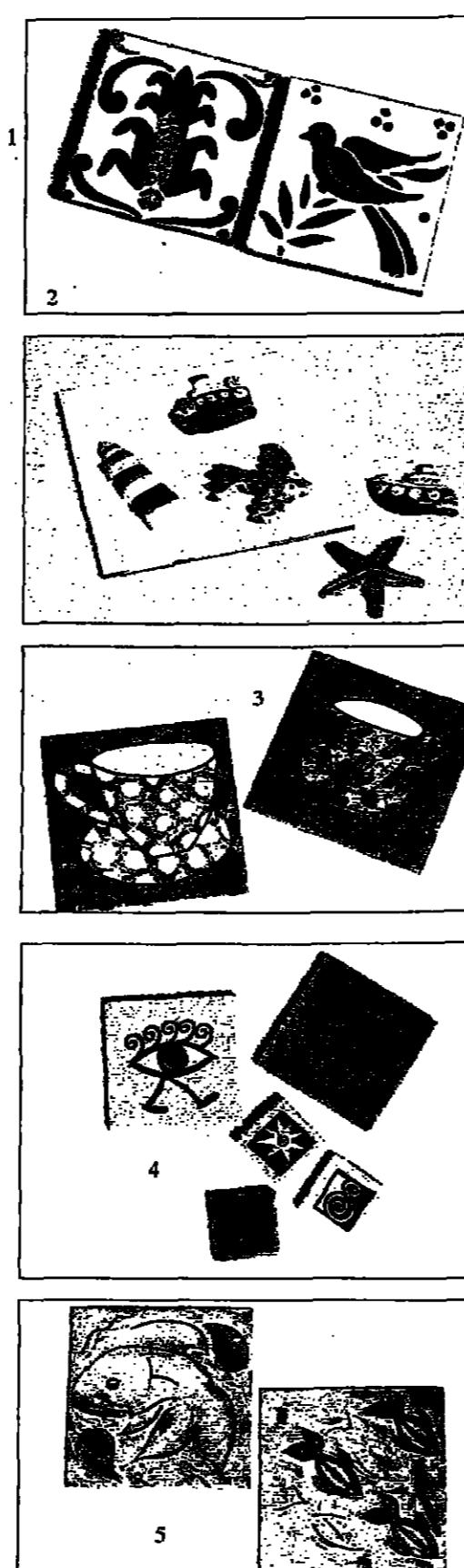
Best buy? Checked duvet covers (single: £20; king: £35) and pillowcases (£6.50 each) printed with beautiful vegetable dyes.

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3 Cup & Saucer Tiles, Ken Eardley Designs, £8 each. Fun and cheery handpainted tiles guaranteed to brighten up even the dingiest kitchens or bathrooms. Ken also makes a whole range of functional ceramics including teapots, vases, mugs, jugs and plates. Ken Eardley Designs, Studio W3, Cockpit Workshops, Northington Street, London WC1. Call 0171-916 5941.

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Photo: John Lawrence

Zen and the art of garden maintenance

Japanese gardens are ideal for small spaces and the style is now easy to achieve, reports Anna Pavord

Gardens made in the authentic Japanese style are rare in this country. Most of the gardens we think of as Japanese here are English gardens talking with a Japanese accent. The superficial accessories – the stone lantern, the bridge, the maple tree – are often taken to represent the real thing. You can't buy Zen off the shelf at the garden centre.

Japanese gardens are popular now because they fit well into small spaces. And they are perceived as being low-maintenance. That's not strictly true. A proper Japanese garden is rather demanding on its keeper. Leaves have to be swept up every day. Blades of grass must be picked out from the moss, and sand raked into cool rippling patterns of water breaking round rocks. Every tree must be clipped and pruned and tweaked to conform to a particular vision (think blasted heath and you'll be on the right lines). Nature may be the pattern, but control is the key element.

Our gardens are mostly attempts to escape from images of the blasted heath, the rocky promontory. We like flowers, colour, smells; constructs that have as little as possible to do with what is going on outside the garden boundaries. In the 18th century, though, I think garden makers would have been closer to understanding an authentic Japanese garden. That's not to say they would have found it any easier to grapple with the Zen underpinning, but someone like Capability Brown would have been in complete sympathy with the principle of tweaking nature. He borrowed distant landscapes in exactly the way that Japanese master gardeners did. They called it "shakkei". He called it a vista.

And garden owners in the 18th century were still tuned into the classical past. They could still imagine gods in stones, nymphs in streams. They understood, too, how gardens should reflect and enhance the spirit of a place. The

Japanese call it *feng-shui*, and hire geomancers to advise on the best way to harness the energy of a particular site.

But the big vogue for making Japanese gardens in England arrived much later, at the beginning of this century. It was the tail end of the mania for all things Japanese that Gilbert and Sullivan pilloried in *The Mikado*. By then, though, it was a style thing rather than a philosophical thing, although several garden owners in search of authenticity, such as Louis Greville at Heale House in Wiltshire, imported Japanese gardeners as well as bridges, tea houses and stone lanterns. Japan in tea-garden mode appealed to British taste rather more than the austere, rock-and-sand landscapes of the purist Zen style.

Louis Greville had been second secretary at the British Embassy in Tokyo in the late 1880s and on his return to England in 1901 he laid out a Japanese garden on the banks of the river Avon that flows through the grounds of Heale House. A red lacquer bridge (a smaller version of the famous Nikko bridge in Japan) straddles the stream and an authentic Japanese tea house, with rice paper walls and grass tatami mats, was put up by Japanese carpenters. The screen walls slide open to reveal superb views up and down the river.

Greville's Japanese gardeners channelled the two streams here to make complex patterns of still and running water, with more bridges linking small islands in the streams. The planting was simpler than that it is now, though some of the original trees remain: maples, Japanese flowering cherries and a superb *cercidiphyllum*. It is my favourite Anglo-Japanese garden.

In Ireland between 1906 and 1910, Lord Wavertree was doing the same sort of thing on his estate at Tully, Co Kildare. He brought over a Japanese garden master called Tasa Eida and his son Meirou, who, with an army of Irish

labourers, laid out a garden symbolising man's journey through life. I'd like to have eavesdropped on the comments that came out of that clash of cultures.

The Japanese gardens laid out in Edwardian times were mostly incidental to much larger garden schemes. Now they are popular with owners of small gardens because, as the landscape architect Philip Cave points out, more than any other garden style, a Japanese garden makes a small space seem big.

Mr Cave, who has his own design practice in London, makes a speciality of Japanese garden design. He's done both private gardens (including roof gardens, which lend themselves well to the Japanese style) and public ones, such as the difficult site in front of the Yaohan Plaza on the Edgware road in north London.

In the mid-Seventies, after finishing his degree, Mr Cave went wandering for two years. He looked for enlightenment in the Islamic gardens of Iran and Pakistan. He meditated in the great Mogul gardens of India. In Japan, he finally found his *metier* and attached himself as apprentice to a master garden-maker, a Kyoto professor called Kinsaku Nakane.

He spoke no English and Mr Cave spoke no Japanese, but doing rather than talking is the essence of learning how to garden – in any garden style. Professor Nakane was starting work on a new garden in Kyoto. The most critical task, after the initial survey, was to choose the right rocks for the garden. Professor Nakane took his apprentice to rock nurseries the way we might visit plant centres to choose shrubs.

That's one of the difficulties of making a Japanese garden in this country. We don't have any equivalent to a rock nursery, one step up from a quarry, where rocks are displayed almost as art objects and chosen for particular purposes in the overall layout. As in flower arranging, odd numbers are preferred to even

ones, and rocks are generally grouped in threes, fives or sevens.

Another difficult thing about making Japanese gardens here, says Mr Cave, is imagining all the plants grown to their proper proportions around the rocks. "In Japan," he explains, "the few key plants are generally brought in at vast expense as mature specimens, root pruned, branch pruned and already shaped in the form in which they will be kept until they die."

"What was the most difficult thing about his apprenticeship?" I asked, imagining some great metaphysical struggle as he jettisoned the mental baggage of the Western world. The answer was more prosaic. "Lifting rocks," he said. The rocks could be swung roughly into position with slings and cranes, but the finesse of the design depended on the exact alignment of one rock with the next. That could be done only by hand. Or rather, by shoulder.

Typical plants are ones we are familiar with in our own gardens, although we don't necessarily grow them in a Japanese way. Evergreen azaleas in a Japanese garden are usually clipped into rounded shapes to look like groups of boulders. Trained pines are essential, as are maples and moss. Garden centres in Japan, says Mr Cave, sell moss tufts the way we buy grass. Moss isn't appreciated here the way it is there. Perhaps that could be a way of getting to the point of Japanese gardens. Zen through moss.

Philip Cave's book 'Creating Japanese Gardens' has just been published in paperback (Aurum Press, £14.95). Enthusiasts can join the Japanese Garden Society, Groves Mill, Shakers Lane, Long Itchington, Warwickshire CV23 8QB (01292 632746). The garden at Heale House is open daily, 10am-5pm. Admission £2.50. Tully, Co Kildare, is now owned by the Irish National Stud and the Japanese gardens there are open daily (9.30-6) until 12 November. Admission £3.



CUTTINGS

"With regard to your article (*The Independent*, 10 August) on jasmines," writes David Singmaster of London SW4, "I think the most characteristic jasmine of the Mediterranean region is the night-blooming jasmine, *Cestrum nocturnum*. This has tiny, waxy, yellow-white flowers which open up after dark and produce a wonderful perfume which can be recognised from 20 or 30 feet away. I grew it in Berkeley, California, which is slightly milder than southern England. After about three years, it was a bush about 4ft high, getting into full flower. However, it seems that the plant is not really hardy in England, though it may survive and even thrive on a protected, south-facing patio. Three years ago, we bought two plants from a specialist in exotic plants. We keep them in our kitchen over the winter. They propagate readily from cuttings, so we now have four plants. Last summer they bloomed fairly well, but they didn't show any sign of doing so this summer. A sprig of flowers in a jar of water will open up and scent a room every night for about a week."

Mr Singmaster does not say where he bought his *Cestrum nocturnum*, but plants are available from Burncoose and Southdown Nurseries, Gwenapp, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 6BJ (01209 861112), The Plantman Nursery, North Wounson Farm, Turowleigh, Okehampton, Devon EX20 2JA (01647 231618), Reads Nursery, Hales Hall, Loddon, Norfolk NR14 6QW (01508 548395), Bloomsbury, Upper Lodge Farm, Padworth Common, Reading, Berkshire RG7 4JD (01734 700239). All do mail order.

WEEKEND WORK

Start to clear out summer bedding plants if you plan to replace them with wallflowers or sweet williams. Though it is difficult to throw out plants that are still doing well, you need time to fork over and feed the ground before the next batch of hopefuls goes in. Look for wallflowers that have been pinched out in youth, forcing them into a bushy habit. Tall, spindly wands are not worth earth-room.

Put the plants before the bulbs if you plan to interplant with tulips or daffodils, or sod's law dictates that you will dig up the bulb when you try to plant the wallflowers. At Giverny this spring, sharp lemon-coloured wallflowers were used to effect under a white-flowering cherry tree. Dark purple wallflowers were used with mauve sweet rocket, forget-me-nots, alliums and blue pansies in beds edged with London pride and aubrieta.

Lawns edges get tough treatment from dogs and children. Repair the worst bits by cutting rectangles behind the edge and re-laying the other way round. Sift earth over the joint.

Sow lettuces such as "Cynthia" and "Novita" in the greenhouse for spring. Outside, use a variety such as "Arctic King". Japanese greens and lamb's lettuce can be sown outside for cut-and-come-again salad.

Take cuttings of shrubs such as berberis, deciduous ceanothus, cistus, hebe. Choose semi-ripe wood and cut sections 4-in long. Root them in a greenhouse propagating frame, or stick them round the edge of a pot with sandy compost. Cover the pot with a polythene bag to conserve moisture.

Cut down old blackberry and loganberry canes after fruiting is over and train new canes in their place. Plant new strawberry plants, setting them 18in apart in well-fed ground. The rows need to be 2ft 6in apart.

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How to have a field day with the secrets of local historians

Old names can provide clues to the structures used by our ancestors, reports Clive Fewins

The name "Bubbles Field" mystified a group of new residents when they arrived in the village of Holberton, South Devon. When they asked how it had gained its name, retired farmer, John Sherrell, recalled a "creamwell" at the bottom of the field.

"It was last used before the war," says Mr Sherrell, who is 88. "The bubbles refer to the springs that used to bubble up there."

When the group walked to the bottom of the field they found a decaying cylindrical stone structure with the remnants of a wooden door buried in the undergrowth. It was built directly over a spring, which was still there.

"The building's function was to keep cream and butter cool in the days before modern refrigerators were widespread," says Ian Kemp, who led the search party.

Rediscovering the Holberton creamwell is the sort of event that brings delight to campaigners Susan Clifford and Angela King. The two joint co-ordinators of Common Ground, the London-based environmental charity dedicated to preserving the "local distinctiveness of our countryside", have recently turned their attention to fields.

"Field Days is a national project in which we want to persuade people to look very hard at their local fields, and a good way to start is by studying the old field names, as the people did at Holberton," says Sue Clifford.

Bubbles Field is not an exceptionally unusual one, but it was still exciting for the Holberton group to realise how it had gained its name by means of such a graphic example.

"Field names like Cuckoo Nook, The Vinegar Bottle, Saucer Field, Drumble Hangmans field, Long Friday, Teakettle Handlepiece and Wot Ground have similarly graphic titles, but it is rarely as easy as it was in Holberton to trace their origins."

The importance of field names to Common Ground and many local historians is that they reveal the rich diversity of our landscape. While conservationists have been looking more closely at hedgerows, stone walls, flower meadows, ponds, trees and barns, they have often neglected to study the fields that gave rise to so many of these features, Ms Clifford points out.

"By rediscovering what their names mean we can encourage people to look after these fields," she says. "Like woods, they need using. All fields should do a job, which is why set-aside is so awful. By going back to the old name, known to locals and found in title deeds and on the maps of the Forties, we can often gain clues as to what the field was used for."

The names may also suggest future potential. For example, Blue Button Field. With a small change in management, a



Field trip: Common Ground's Julian Cross near Shaftesbury in Dorset. Photograph: John Lawrence

field with such a name may once again be a flourishing source of the wild sabbaticus that provided its name.

Likewise any name that hints at the presence of water – such as "Bubbles" – might help drought-ridden farmers to solve some of their problems.

In 1994 the Herefordshire Field Name Survey Group, which is composed of volunteers from a number of local history groups, won a British Archaeological Society Award for their research, which covered 260 parishes and more than 125,000 fields. Their finds have included a hitherto unknown motte and bailey castle in a field named "Castle Tump" in the village of Upton Bishop, near Ross-on-Wye.

A similar occurrence took place at Welton in Northamptonshire, where local enthusiasts discovered a motte and bailey previously not included in the British Historic Monuments Record.

"Tump" is one of the easier field names to interpret – it usually refers to a mound of some sort. However, seemingly obvious words can be deceptive as very often the meaning of a name has changed.

A good example might be "barrow". The word is pretty unlikely to refer to a wheelbarrow – they probably did not use them at the time these fields gained their names – but people often assume this refers to a prehistoric burial site. However the old English names for "wood" and "hill" are very similar, and have been cor-

rupted over the years into the word "barrow", so when the word appears in an old field name it does not necessarily signify the presence of a prehistoric burial site.

"Nevertheless, when a field bears this name it is in general worth investigating," says the appropriately named John Field, author of *A History of English Field Names*.

At Sulgrave Manor in Northamptonshire there are regular seasonal activities focusing on the surrounding fields, such as demonstrations of scarecrow-making, studying the old field names, making maps of them with local schoolchildren, and celebrating Apple Day in October. There are plans to incorporate the study of local fields in the national curriculum work they carry out in conjunction with local schools.

"We plan to grow a grain crop and also flax, which we can spin and weave, and also a crop of dye plants of some sort," says the deputy director, Maureen Jeffery. "So often, modern children do not associate food with crops any more, which is a shame. After all, in Tudor times, which is the period we concentrate on, most of the children round here would have worked on the land. We shall use no artificial fertilisers and only water from the stream, so the children can also learn to appreciate the consequences of crop failure."

Sue Clifford says: "We take it lying down when the French tell us that the soil of every vine slope in Burgundy produces a different flavour. In this country, just as

much, crops taste differently from different land. Some of our fields have had four to five thousand years of work put into them. Rather than turning our backs on our fields we should take them more seriously, and encourage farmers to keep them in good heart."

As a start, Common Ground is trying to encourage local groups to act as "field marshals", who will try to alert local people to the riches present in so many old fields.

They hope that farmers and landowners can be persuaded to have the names of old fields painted or carved on their gates. Another idea is that people who have bought a building plot on what used to be a field may like to name their houses after the old field name.

"Field Days is about much more than field names," says Ms Clifford. "It is about raising everyone's awareness of the great richness of history, archaeology, buildings, artefacts, legends, folklore, names, geology, soils, boundaries, plant and animal life – and the potential for wider use to be found in our fields."

'A History of English Field Names', by John Field, is published by Longman at £15.99. For literature on the Common Ground Field Days project send an A5 s.a.e. to Common Ground, Seven Dials warehouse, 44, Earls Court Road, London WC2H 9LA.

A cull of the stags that are roaring away

For anyone who goes stalking in Scotland, the main aim is to contribute to the annual cull which keeps deer numbers to a tolerable level: you are shooting not only for sport, but for the good of the herd and the environment. A further benefit is that the exercise takes you into the remotest corners of the Highlands, and enables you to see lovely places which you would otherwise never visit.

So it was when we set out by boat on a brilliant morning from the hamlet of Kingairloch, on the coast of the Morvern peninsula in Argyll. Our destination was the outer fringe of the Ardormish estate, away to the south west – a long ridge of mountain, a mile or so inland, from which shot deer can be recovered only by sea.

My stalker/guide for the day was Iain Thorner, a scholarly local historian whose skill and knowledge added immensely to the pleasure of the expedition. As we forged along the coast in the *Cathula*, the tourist boat which he operates with a colleague, Robin Maclean, Iain regaled us with fact and legend.

The wooded cliffs, he told us, were pocked with level platforms, cut out by the charcoal-burners of yore. At many points there were ruins of houses abandoned many generations ago. Here, quite recently, four pigs were turned loose for the summer, and flourished mightily on natural food.

We went ashore at Eignaig (the Bay of the Oaks), where a single house nestles among woods in a tiny bay. Then we climbed away up the footpath which is the place's only link with the interior. Robin, meanwhile, took the boat out again, to patrol off the coast and stand by to collect us.

Across the water, just off the mainland, lay Bernera Island, long and slim and dark as the back of a whale, of which Iain told a curious story. Apparently the 6th-century St Columba prophesied that if anyone cut down a great tree growing on the island, retribution would strike in the form of blood, water and fire. So it did in the 19th century, when a forebear of Iain's took the tree to make a staircase in his castle. During the felling, transport and preparation, several men were killed, and through three fires in the castle, the staircase escaped unscathed.

By the time we were on the ridge, at 1,500ft, the wind had risen violently. Robin came on the radio to say that he could not stay where he was, but was



DUFF
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heading for Innismore Bay, five miles ahead of us. This shaped our tactics and drove us on.

Over our picnic lunch Iain brought out another strange tale, modern this time, of a nearby landowner, who went off to work in the woods one morning, and was never seen alive again. In spite of extensive searches with dogs, no trace of him was discovered until five years later. Then, the day after a memorial service had been held, his skeleton was discovered, fully clothed and sitting propped against the base of a tree, not half a mile from home.

A trudge along the ridge was enlivened by the sight of 150 deer coming up out of the interior in a cavalcade – a spectacle which raised the question now vexing many Highland lairds. Which should have priority – deer and sheep, or trees?

For the past 150 years the animals have held sway, and by their relentless grazing they have contributed to the decline of the forest. Now the mood has swung in favour of trees, and people are speaking of a colossal cull, to reduce deer numbers to a level at which natural regeneration will again become possible.

At last we were in a position to spy down on to the relatively flat ground which stretched away to the top of the cliffs. Several groups of stags were in view, and we got a beast which, we had discerned through our telescopes, was past its best.

It remained only to haul the carcass to the boat. A radio call confirmed that our skipper was anchored below us. An hour later, after a murderous descent of the cliff – all rocks and holes concealed under bracken – we were safely back on board, with seals popping up all round us, and the sun going down beyond the ruin of Ardormish Castle, perched on its promontory in silhouette against a silvery haze.

So ended a day of stags, roaring, golden eagles soaring, good fellowship, and history both comic and mournful, all in close proximity to the ever-changing sea.

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CROATIA:
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Croatia is all about subtraction. Take away six years, and you reveal a coastline that attracted 10 million tourists in 1990. Remove the rest of Yugoslavia, and you are still left with the region where four out of five of them holidayed. And until next summer at least, Croatia is

blissfully minus the crowds. The Dalmatian coast, that stunning stretch of rocky shoreline framed between mountains and the crystal waters of the Adriatic Sea, looks much the same as it did when Yugoslavia was a country and Yugotours was the cheap and cheerful company that sent us there

by the plane. In the late 80s, Croatia was to be the new Spain for Western Europeans. Hotels were appearing or being planned on a grand scale. Then, in 1991, the tragic, bloody carve-up began.

Croatia has emerged from the sad and shabby war with considerable touristic booty.

The haul comprises seven protected National Parks, two cities classed as world heritage treasures, not to mention the 1,185 islands, islets and reefs.

The strangely jerky geography of Croatia means there is a logical slide south-east from the Istrian peninsula, where a few

thousand brave (or crafty) Brits have this summer been saving the sunbeds for the re-emergence of mass-market tourism. This event is scheduled for next May when Britain's biggest tour operator returns to Croatia.

To mangle the company's slogan: if Thomson plans to do it next year – do it now.



Croatia's coast: indulge yourself.

Photograph: Katz

Marco Polo was (born) here

By Pascal Wyse and Henrietta Seebohm

The hotels that, next summer, should be packed with Thomson holiday-makers, are concentrated in Istria: a Kent-sized wedge poking out like a tonsil from the throat of the Adriatic.

With the flexible frontiers that are *de rigueur* in the Balkans, the peninsula of Istria has an understandably strong Italian flavour – it was part of Italy until 1947 and has managed to retain a trickle of tourists during recent years. The hilltop town of Rovinj is crowned with the impressive Cathedral of St Euphemia which looms over the tangled activity of the fishermen in the harbour below. Here, travel inertia happily sets in among fresh sardines, chips and beer, and ice-cream – a national addiction.

Somehow we retrieved the momentum, and continued around the coast to Rijeka, which is one end of the line. This particular line is Jadrolinija, a shipping company whose army of ferries remained largely neutral during the fighting, which are now back in service shuttling along the coast as far as Dubrovnik. Travelling this way gives you the most comprehensive and serene view as you weave your way through the islands – and the chance to stop off at two islands of your choice as you travel south.

Yet before we indulged ourselves, we did the proper thing and paid brief respects to the capital, Zagreb. With time not on our side, the cosmopolitan offerings of the city gave way to search for food. The hypnotic markets are the best places to track down culinary authenticity, as many of the restaurants serve dull Euro-cuisine. A morning of mining requests in deli's is well worth it.

Zagreb to Split by bus can take you through the Plitvice Lakes National Park – and the first evidence of the war. The past, present and future of the many small villages that lie along this lush mountain journey is shown by burnt-out, patched-up or brand-new buildings. Away from the tourism enclaves, which look eager to the future, these deserted ruins haunt the people and horrify the tourist. As the terrain

Getting there Croatian Airlines (0171-306 3105) flies daily from Heathrow to Zagreb (£275 return). It has charters from Gatwick to split and Manchester to Dubrovnik.

Packages Phoenix (0345 626468), Balkan (0171-543 5555) and Thomson (0900 502555) will offer packages next summer. A week in Korcula with Phoenix in May costs from £257. For a fortnight half-board in peak season in Rovinj, Thomson charges £509.

Getting around Jadrolinija ferries operate comprehensive services for the entire coastline and all the important islands. Rijeka to Dubrovnik (22 hours) costs around £16. Buses are the best way to travel inland. Local buses take a single payment of 5 kunas (4 if you buy a ticket in advance from a street kiosk) irrespective of journey length. Tickets for long-distance buses must be bought (in advance for busy routes) at the central stations.

Money There are about eight Croatian kunas to the pound. This new currency is impossible to change outside Croatia, so don't exchange more than you need. Sterling is accepted in banks and bureaux de change, but for a stash of emergency cash, take Deutschmarks – much more easily negotiable than pounds.



Who to ask: Croatian National Tourist Board, 2 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Rd, London W6 9ER (0181-563 7979)

And the Foreign office says . . .

"Exercise caution in areas bordering Bosnia Herzegovina and Montenegro including the Pravilka Peninsula, where some restrictions on movement may be encountered. Visitors should be aware of, and take local advice, on the presence of unexploded mines and ordnance in areas affected by war damage."

Croatian students who had read our guidebook on the bus – with some amusement – spotted us once more. They were on their way to check out a bit of progress, the newly opened Café Vladičica, looking down on the city from Marjan Hill. Surveying the view of their country, they made it clear how much Croatia needs – and deserves – tourism. "Before the war, the English went to France, the French ran away to Italy, so the Italians came here along with the Germans," they neatly summed up. "Anyway, we're off to the Shakespeare Bar, if you want to come."

We split from Split on a newly decorated ship that must have seen service for much of Marshal Tito's reign (faded pictures of the Croatian leader of Yugoslavia can still

be glimpsed through the occasional window), and were steered gingerly through the tricky inshore waters.

The island of Hvar presents a bustling exterior – like Split, an attack on the senses, but a more sensual one. The sight of two grubby rucksacks (and owners) created a row amongst the group of locals gathered at the harbour to offer their spare rooms for spare cash. And this is the hospitality to seek, often offering welcome inexpensive accommodation.

This Croatian "Madeira" holds a record for its quota of sunshine, enjoyed by visitors and vineyard alike. Amass a picnic of sheep's cheese and cured meats and climb up to the Venetian fortress built to protect Hvar from Turkish invasion in the 16th century, and you spice the feast with full panoramas of the town below.

There are few better places to enjoy the soft September sun than while drifting through a seascape in the general direction of Greece. Still three hours' sail from Dubrovnik, the island of Korcula tempts you back to land with what appears to be an appetiser for the city ahead – a Dubrovnik in miniature. Here you are in esteemed travel company as you enter the birthplace of Marco Polo. Despite being ruled at various times by Venetians, Croats, Hungarians, Bosnian king Tvrtko, Austrians, French and Russians, and even briefly occupied by the British, Korcula carries a firm national stamp. Korcula is famous for its stonemasons, shipbuilders, sea merchants, sculptors and artists. However, you plan your tour of the old walled town, the herringbone pattern of streets quickly hem you in, revealing by turns the products of these crafts.

In the course of 10 days, you can see a bewildering Balkan repertoire of culture and countryside, mood and majesty, blessed with a generous scattering of heritage. You might easily go home happy right now – not were Dubrovnik, the greatest Adriatic city of all, so seductively close.

Dubrovnik: a lesson in ancient splendour

George Bernard Shaw was never an employee of the Croatian tourist board. But his slogan still works for them: "Those who seek paradise on Earth should come to Dubrovnik". There's an easy way to investigate this thesis: just pitch up at the main gate to the old town – Pile Gate – and prepare for a lesson in ancient splendour.

As you pass over the drawbridge, you are scrutinised from above by the city's patron, Saint Blaise, who cradles a miniature of the whole town in his left hand. To appreciate properly the barely scarred mosaic of Dubrovnik, invest a few kunas (about 70p) for a ticket to roam around the two kilometres of surrounding fortifications. From here you can map out the monasteries, churches and terracotta-roofed dwellings that crowd this platform of Adriatic light and stone. Fig trees and lunchtime smells which reach up from the gardens and open kitchen windows below, prove the buildings' inner hubbub – these are not just museum pieces.

Dubrovnik is a place to meander – there are 1,000 years to consider here. Rush through the Franciscan monastery and you may just overlook one of the oldest working pharmacies in Europe. Turn any corner too quickly and you are bound to miss the gaze of a statue from above or the concealed entrance to another monumental maze.

If your paradise is a more solitary one, stony beaches are a stone's throw away. Push the boat out further and you can have the island of Lokrum practically to yourself. To disappear from sight altogether, put on a snorkel and test Jacques Cousteau's assertion that Dubrovnik enjoys the cleanest sea in the Mediterranean. That tourist board enlists all the big names.

The morning market offers an abundance of fresh

herbs, local brews, succulent fruit and cheese in oil – a speciality of the region; or for more immediate refreshment and relief from the mid-day sun, seek refuge in one of the many stylish cafés that line the pedestrian backbone to the town.

The only traffic in this carefree zone is that of the evening strollers, who pour into the streets, proloping and pouting to try to match the town's beauty. While the kids found heritage corners to knock a ball against and the steps to St Blaise's cathedral played host to an impromptu singalong, we tracked down the Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra rounding off the Summer Festival with a concert in the Rector's Palace.

Up the steep hill that leads away from the main gate, what appears to be a small balcony bar miraculously seats four hundred. This open-air cinema whose ocean views are as distracting as the movies it plays, shows Dubrovnik's gift for disguising its more modern distractions. Underground, inside Club Arsenal down the road, an explosive mix of Croatian soldiers and teenage girls fail to ruffle the cravats of the Atlas Club Nautika above.

No wonder half the world has tried to get their hands on Dubrovnik. It has been captured by the Byzantine Empire, by Arabs and Normans, by Venice, by Napoleon, and by Austria-Hungary – and has remained indestructible. Posted outside the various entrances to the Old Town are maps detailing the damage sustained during the siege of 1991. Over 2,000 shells fell on the city and as the map shows in black, every street was damaged in some way. It is only the occasional pock mark on the pavement or a newly paved roof that confirms this information. There is no paradise lost here.

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Robin Hood reigns in the city of lacemakers

Edmund Bealby-Wright visits Nottingham for the Goose Fair



Next weekend the normally placid Forest Recreation Ground will spontaneously ignite into electric fire. For three days this park beside the A60 will burn with thousands of whirling light bulbs, screaming adolescents and groaning generators. This is the largest funfair in Europe.

The name "Goose Fair" hails from the days when families bought the bird for Christmas dinner on the first weekend of October. Now, amid the sonic dash of hundred of public address systems each blaring a different pop tune, the smell of warm plastic sold as hot dogs, the bouffant beehives of pink candyfloss, the seashell goldfish in plastic bags and the overflowing litterbins, no one misses the absent geese.

My own undying love for funfairs has been purely voyeuristic ever since I was sick round the back of a luxury trailer home after a particularly gruelling ride on a waltzing teacup. A ferocious Alsation on a chain chased me off and began to devour the proceeds. I realised he was having more fun than I was. But I can see that some people want to be turned upside down and inside out. "*Tout à son goût*," applies to humans as well as Alsations.

It would be advisable to settle your stomach before exploring Nottingham itself, because the city's dizzying number of attractions include man-made caves under a shopping centre, a humorous look at imprisonment in the old County Gaol and a whole variety of sights with tenuous connections to Robin Hood. You can relive "The Tales of Robin Hood" in

Maid Marian Way, try to imagine the Merry Men storming the castle (not easy – it was demolished in 1651) or visit Sherwood Forest. Further afield is "The World of Robin Hood" near Retford, and the latest attraction, which they call "Robin Hood in Fairyland".

If two-minute rides at the fairground are not nauseating enough, luxury minibuses will whiz you up and down the city's many hills on a roller-coaster ride lasting half an hour. But most people prefer to get to know the Queen of the Midlands, as she is known, on foot. I don't know if Nottingham gained its feminine gender from its undulating terrain, or from the fact that the town's most famous industry (apart from selling Robin Hood souvenirs) is lace manufacture. Whatever the reason, describing the city's character is like describing the ideal mistress. Not only is she curvaceous, she is sophisticated, expensive, and half French.

Her dual nationality dates back to the Normans, who built the first castle. For centuries a French borough and an English borough stood side by side, and there was once a wall across the market-place reputedly to prevent the two communities from fighting. This dual nationality persists in spirit; the French borough is dedicated to shopping and entertainment; the English borough is the commercial and professional district. Nottingham's shops and theatres draw people from far and wide, leaving the English borough relatively quiet, despite the fact that it is the most interesting part of the city.

Exploring along High Pavement, you come to an area called the Lace Market. It is not a market in the usual sense, but a jumble of narrow streets dedicated to making and selling lace. You know you have got there when you find the medieval church of St Mary, surrounded on three sides by Victorian warehouses which tower over it like bodyguards protecting Dustin Hoffman. Squashed down like a jack-in-the-box ready to spring, it is a very fine and venerable old church, but the warehouses are more immediately impressive. Five or six storeys high, swankily dressed in red brick with white stone detailing, they have something Italian about them. These

palazzi are a product of the astonishing lace boom of the 1850s from which the area hasn't quite recovered. Lace-making continues in Nottingham, having covered late Victorians with mourning veils, antimacassars and cake doilies, the industry now persists on a much reduced scale. The inevitable museum telling the "story of lace" gives an insight – but you get a more powerful impression of how important it once was by walking around these streets.

The most impressive of all is caged Broadway. The whole street was designed by one man, a local architect, TC Hine, who cut this undulating canyon through the enormous warehouses so that they seem to have miraculously parted to make way for the approaching customer. Anyone who walks between these two billowing curtains of brick will arrive in a euphoric state, ready to purchase yards of expensive material. The high walls are

beautifully articulated with stone-dressed corners and cornices. Imagine two great classical churches playing booms-a-day, with their apses practically touching, and you have some idea how it feels to step into this world. Grand doorways entice the customer into the various lace-makers' studios, where large windows illuminate the samples for inspection. If you penetrate the maze of courtyards you will find chimneys that sprout as confidently as a Borromini spire. Many industrial buildings are dramatic – these ones are operatic. I saw a group of secretaries going off to get their sandwiches and I swear they swayed their hips like the chorus in *Carmen*.

Down the road, the same architect designed the palatial Adams Building for another of the lace barons, constructing a heart-swelling facade shaped like an opened-out corset. With a thrusting central apron flanked by curved wings, and an imposing flight of steps rising to the wildly decorative entrance hall, this shapely building enticed Victorian womanhood to enter, only to find themselves trapped into buying more of their famously superfluous undergarments. It is still probably the grandest place in the world to buy lingerie.

Spend an afternoon in the lace district and I promise you won't be tempted any more by the sight of men's tights in shades of Lincoln green.

Nottingham Goose Fair runs from 3 to 5 October, 11am to midnight. For Nottinghamshire tourist information, call 0115-977 3558.

Racing certainties for a new Prince Bishop

Party piece: Sedgefield. As Labour activists meet in Blackpool, Teresa Allan visits their leader's lair

Tony Blair's constituency? No one seemed to know where to find Sedgefield. Eventually my turf-loving father revealed the whereabouts of the Islington inhabitant's seat: "Sedgefield's just north of Darlington and it's got a racecourse. Not a very good one."

It is apt that the Labour leader should represent a constituency in County Durham, which is the land of the Prince Bishops. They obviously like religious leaders around here. In the Middle Ages, the Prince Bishops ran Northumbria with a rod of iron, with little regard to the monarch of the day.

Tony Blair's Sedgefield constituency is in sharp relief to those of the two other party leaders. Unlike Huntingdon and Yeovil, which have bland, pedestrianised town centres, Sedgefield is a serious village (although it prefers to describe itself as a small market town) with a village green and five surrounding pubs. This rural idyll amid industrial decline is dominated by St Edmund's Church, which has magnificent 17th-century wood carvings.

A half-mile walk up the path from behind the Hardwick Arms Pub takes you to Hardwick Country Park, designed by the landscape gardener James Paine in the 18th century. Paine's tasteful mix of Gothic follies, man-made lakes and carefully planted woodlands is refreshing, particularly a country-side in this part of limestone County Durham is otherwise uneventful. The helpful park ranger (Mr Gibson, on my day) will be happy to tell you about the restoration of the serpentine bridge, if he is not already dealing with the daily invasion by "four or five coachloads" of schoolchildren.

I fled to the tranquillity of Sedgefield Pottery, in Cross Street, where Bill Todd, a local potter, mixes wood ash with glaze to produce distinctive, dark grey china, ornamented with swirling design which seem Middle-Eastern as much as Celtic in influence. The pottery, formerly the village smithy, has been retained and restored with due respect to the blacksmith. On the hoof, I discovered that bus services

from the Green outside St Edmund's Church are surprisingly frequent. A £4.75

Explorer day pass took me, in thunder and lightning, to Bishop Auckland, the traditional seat of the Bishop of Durham, where amongst other attractions there is a deer park.

Travelling in the other direction to Hartlepool, the neighbouring parliamentary seat of Peter Mandelson MP (widely regarded as the power behind what may become Tony Blair's princely throne) I realised that should Labour gain power, Mr Blair need have no fears about quelling local trade unions. His constituency office is based not in Sedgefield but nearby at so-called Trimdon Colliery. The young village of Trimdon, unlike Sedgefield, is almost aggressively new and sprawling, with not a miner in sight. There are no longer any working pits in Durham, so there won't be any local trouble for Mr Blair from the NUM.

Mr Blair's constituency is scarred by disused railway lines, which cut swathes into the landscape, and are now mostly used as long-distance paths. So there also won't be any trouble from the NUR. Incidentally, trains no longer run between Stockton and Darlington. One hesitates to speculate as to whether this is because the first ever victim of a railway accident in Britain was on this line in 1830 (he was a MP). But there is an excellent railway museum at Darlington.

I didn't bother with the racecourse, on the basis that our three main political parties have been arguing the merits of first-past-the-post for far too long. But I did notice that the local authority's motif on its vehicles is a stag. Bambi?

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SIMON CALDER Air Passenger Duty is a poll tax with wings'



Travellers are easy targets, especially for governments keen to raise some extra cash. The Chancellor's tax on travel, Air Passenger Duty (APD), has been with us for two years – during which it has cost British travellers and foreign visitors £60m, all gathered by airlines and agents who have been obliged to become unpaid tax collectors.

APD is a poll tax with wings: the £5 charge that applies on domestic and European flights adds 17 per cent to the cost of a short hop between London to Scotland, but less than 0.7 per cent to a business-class return fare to Athens.

Yet the travelling public has paid the price with barely a whimper. This has two worrying implications. The first is that Kenneth Clarke will see passengers as an easy source of additional revenue in his November budget. The second is that other governments will realise what

a rich seam of cash can be mined from tourists.

Some British holiday-makers would be forgiven for thinking that the Dominican Republic is at the front of the queue. The country has just imposed an "admission fee" of £10. From November, sun-seeking Brits should apply six weeks in advance for a tourist card for this part of the Spanish-speaking Caribbean. This, at least, is what Britain's biggest travel agency, Lunn Poly, is telling its customers in letters sent out this week.

Everyone who has booked a winter holiday in the Dominican Republic is asked to embark on a bureaucratic process that is almost Soviet in its complexity. First you have to write to the right Dominican consulate – the ones in London or Liverpool, not those in Birmingham or Grimsby – requesting an application form

(one per passenger) and sending an s.a.e. Six weeks before you wish to travel, you send the completed form with a fee of £10 a head. After that you'll need a holiday – probably somewhere involving fewer hurdles. So is the country joining the trend for ripping off tourists?

"No," say Dominican diplomats in Britain. The fault, they say, lies with the European Union. In April, the EU Common Visa List came into effect. Suddenly, citizens of the Dominican Republic needed to obtain visas to visit Britain. So by way of retribution, and by order of Presidential decree, from 1 November British passport holders will need a tourist card.

If you are one of the thousands who have been urged to apply in advance, then note that you can get in a lot cheaper on the door – and avoid all the paperwork. Tourist cards can easily be obtained upon

arrival in the Dominican Republic for \$10 (£6.50). Any sensible visitor will, therefore, avoid the tangle of red tape, and save cash.

So why should travellers be told to apply in advance? "The authorities prefer the cards to be obtained in advance of travel, as otherwise delays are likely to occur when passing through customs," says Lunn Poly. So British travellers are being asked to pay out to compensate for understaffing at foreign airports. As the Dominican vice-consul in Liverpool told me, "After a long flight, if you want to queue for ever, then by all means do."

And if you are one of the people booked on a cruise which begins and ends in the Dominican Republic, it is possible that you may have to pay the fee twice – though no one I spoke to was able to tell me for sure.

The most inventive excuse for refusing to bungee-jump over Victoria Falls – that was the tie-break for our Overland through Africa competition, staged in association with STA Travel and Kumuka. Catherine Butt of Dorset responded in verse:

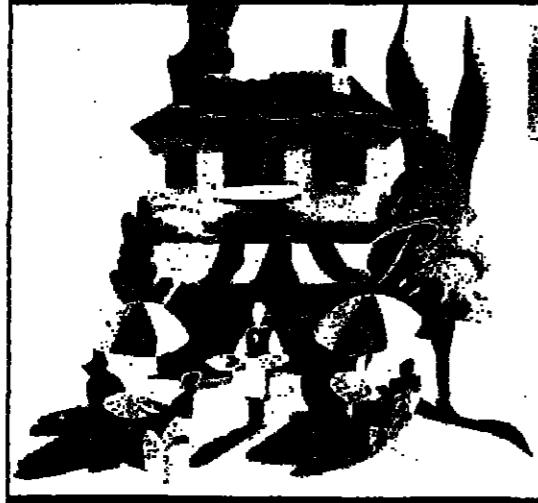
*"It all sounds remarkably easy.
Leaping over the mighty Zambezi
But the thought of those Falls
Quite frankly appalls
And would make me feel terribly queasy."*

Meanwhile Stephen Gilmore (aged 22) of Leeds was frank:

"The adrenaline rush is said to be better than sex and, well, I'll have to wait until I have something to compare it to."

Catherine and Stephen each won a flight from London to Harare from STA, plus a 14-day Kumuka overland tour exploring Zimbabwe and Botswana.

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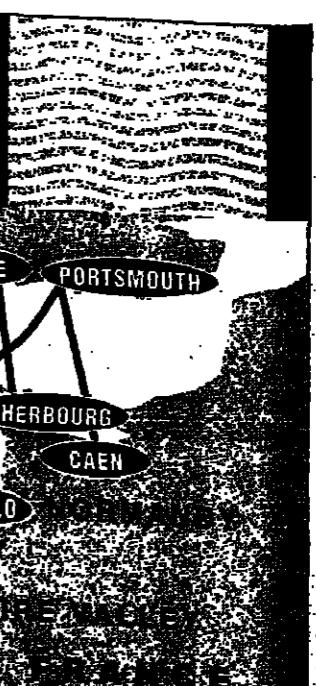
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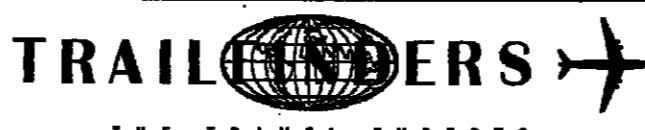
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travel india

INDIA: START HERE

As temperatures in India fall, so too do air fares there. November marks the start of the ideal season for visitors, and coincides with some excellent air fares, writes Omega Douglas. We called a range of discount agents to ask for their lowest return fares for a trip of two weeks in November. All prices listed below are for connecting flights; direct services on Air India are available for £480 through its "General Sales Agent" Welcome Travel (0171-439 3627) to Delhi, Calcutta, Madras and Mumbai.

Delhi: the lowest fare we could find was £340 on Aeroflot (0171-355 2233) from London via Moscow. For only £18 more, though, you can fly on Lufthansa via Frankfurt from London, Birmingham or Manchester through Trailfinders (0171-938 3366).

Mumbai (formerly Bombay): The Lufthansa deal costs the same to here: £358 through Trailfinders. You can fly into one city and back from the other if you wish.

Calcutta: Bridge the World (0171-911 0900) has a fare of £386 on Qatar Airways, travelling via the Gulf.

Madras: Bridge the World quotes £434 from London on Gulf Air. From Manchester, Quest Worldwide (0181-547 3322) has a fare of £389 on Air India.

There are plenty of cheap charter options, too; I have just bought a fortnight's holiday from Manos Travel (0171-216 8070) for £450 on a bed and breakfast basis.

Red tape: British passport holders need a visa to visit India. If you call the 24-hour visa information service (0891 880800), you will spend a lot of time and money finding out the following:

For a three-month tourist visa, apply in person or by post to either of the following: High Commission of India, India House, Aldwych, London WC2B 4NA; or the Consulate-General of India, The Spencers, 19 Augustus Street, Jewellery Quarter, Hockley, Birmingham B18 6DS. If applying by post, first send an s.a.e. for a visa application form to the Postal Visa Section at either of the above addresses.

Once completed, send the form with three passport photos, your passport, and the fee of £13. Note that you must complete all travel within India within three months of the date of issue of the visa. "You are advised not to finalise your travel arrangements until your visa has been issued," says the High Commission.

For longer periods, fees increase rapidly. A visa that allows entry at any time within three months from the date of issue, and a stay of three months, costs £26.

Health: all sorts of risks unknown in the UK exist in India, so medical consultation is essential for visitors to India. As well as the usual suspects of food and waterborne disease, the Medical Advisory Service for Travellers Abroad (0891 224100) says there is currently an epidemic of dengue fever in Delhi.

Further information: Government of India Tourist Office, 7 Cork Street, London W1X 2LN (0171-437 3677).

Seaside retreat of the Raj

Chris Caldicott drifts into Gopalpur-on-Sea

A traditional English summer holiday resort somewhere on the shores of the Bay of Bengal in India's eastern state of Orissa - a fashionable seaside retreat of the Raj? The idea was seductive. The only reference I could

find to the place was in Geoffrey Moorhouse's book *Calcutta*. Moorhouse paid the town a visit during 1970. He talks of the once-booming industry of guesthouses run by Anglo-Indian ladies, and of the subsequent reversion to a sleepy fishing village. He hints, though, that enough relics of Gopalpur-on-Sea's glorious past remain to give it an

endearing sense of faded splendour.

The nearest railhead to Gopalpur is 20km inland at Berampur, a town half-way between

Calcutta and Madras and of so little significance that express trains do not stop there.

The road stretching down from Berampur to the coast ends with a sign announcing "Gopalpur-on-Sea 0 Kilometres", down by the sea wall. Buses terminate outside the police station where another sign invites alighting citizens to "BE FRIENDLY WITH THE POLICE". Alongside the sea wall is a collection of stalls selling seashell necklaces, tea and cigarettes, and a beach café called the "Naaz", playing Bombay film music and offering spicy seaside snacks.

A tall, red-and-white-striped lighthouse is the newest building, close to the ruined shell of the old British Customs House facing out to sea. As well as a Moorish resort, Gopalpur-on-Sea was a port where trade between India and Burma led to a harbour construction to

cope with the imports of teak, gold and rice. In exchange, spices, silver and labourers made their way back across the Bay of Bengal. During the Japanese invasion of Burma in the Forties Allied troops were stationed here in readiness for retaliatory action.

With the end of the war and Burma's self-imposed post-independence isolation the harbour became neglected, and successive storms have completely demolished it. Neglect and storm damage have taken their toll on the abodes of the Anglo-Indian ladies, too, though some still stand, with names such as "Sea View" and "Bellevue".

All that is left of the once-elegant grandeur of the Holiday Inn is the forlorn dining room. It stands alone, with orange mould growing up the walls, in memory of the servant-attended cocktail bar, shaded verandas, tennis courts and manicured lawns that once were. The roof occasionally surrenders substantial portions of itself to gravity. A man whom a plaque on the wall announces as "BB Singh (Ex Navy)" now rents out the property to short-term visitors.

For an hour every afternoon the public are permitted, on payment of one rupee (2p), to climb the spiral staircase to the summit of the lighthouse. The rewards are a welcome cool breeze and a superb view, which it is forbidden to photograph - or so I was emphatically informed by the man entrusted to forbid it. His

claim that this was in case the photographs should fall into enemy hands seemed rather sensationalist. To change the subject, I suggested that to be up on his lighthouse during the monsoon storms must be a dramatic experience. He assured me - rolling his eyes, excited at the memory of it - that there was indeed "a terrible breeze".

From the lighthouse, Gopalpur-on-Sea can be seen in its entirety. Groups of cottages either side of the main street and along the beach make up most of the village. Beyond this is a lush interior of palm trees meeting the sandy shores of the Bay of Bengal as far as the eye can see.

Each group of cottages is served by an iron hand-pump, providing fresh water and a social gathering-place. Fishing is evidently the main industry of Gopalpur: scores of triangular-sailed boats are dotted along the coast each day. As if to match the shape of their sails, the fishermen all sport conical pointed hats, rather like dunce's caps. One of these unusually attired, dark-skinned, muscular men encountered by Moorhouse introduced himself as "nancy boy number five". I found him still there, now selling dried sea-horses and sting-ray tails as souvenirs to the new tourists. Holidaying Bengali business men, Tamil tourists, middle-class Orissans and turbaned Punjabis are joined by day-trippers

from Berampur to stroll along the beach at sunset. They paddle fully clothed, take snaps of each other and consume vast quantities of tea, ice-cream and tiffin. Sunday afternoon is by far the busiest time, when the seaside car park fills with Hero bicycles, Bajaj scooters, flimsy Rajdoot, mighty Royal Enfield motor-bikes, Ambassador cars, and Tata coaches. The scene may have its roots in places like Clacton and Southend-on-Sea, but it is now utterly Indian.

By nightfall the main street is empty of traffic and becomes an open-air cinema. The main place for any other type of night life is the Jagdish Coffee Hotel - not a hotel at all, but a one-room café open to the street. The kitchen at the back receives a constant supply of wood, water, vegetables and milk and turns it into a variety of the finest Indian cuisine.

There is a real hotel, on the edge of Gopalpur-on-Sea, surrounded by a high fence. It's an unattractive building used almost exclusively by tour groups from the former Soviet Union. The white-skinned, overweight Russians give trinkets through the fence to the dark, skinny children of the fishermen. Under a street lamp near the entrance to this hotel, a sinister pimp - ironically afflicted with elephantiasis of the scrotum - attempts to run a sort of red-light district. He tries with unabated enthusiasm to entice passer-by to indulge in the charms of two or three unenthusiastic-looking women for 20 rupees. Whatever Gopalpur-on-Sea may have been like during the Raj, it is certainly no longer a place for elegant night life.

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On Saturday 5th October The Independent will publish a 2 page Africa Special.

For further information please call the Travel Team on 0171 293 2331

outings



A weekly round-up of outings for children

'ARE WE NEARLY THERE?' Theme parks

1066 and all that...

Theme parks get a lot of criticism for commodifying culture and turning history into "heritage", but if you're not a complete purist some of the country's historical sights can offer children an exciting introduction to history. This is a selection of special events taking place this weekend.

Jorvik Viking Centre

Experience the atmosphere, sounds and smells of a thousand years ago as life-like dummies and costumed interpreters bring the streets of Jorvik to life. The excavated remains of actual Viking houses are revealed along the way. Undercover, so good for a rainy day.

Coppergate, York (01904-653000), 9am-5.30pm. Adult, £4.95; child, £3.25. Family, £15.00.

Rievaulx Abbey

Using authentic copies of medieval instruments the Hautbois will entertain visitors to this 12th-century priory with music from the age of the Black Prince. The show runs between 2pm-3.30pm today and tomorrow and features knackers (small round Arabic drums brought back from the Crusades) and an early lute called an uud. The costumed couple will happily chat about the instruments. If all that sounds a little civilised, fidgety children over seven can be consoled with the idea of post-performance battle games. Warring youngsters will be provided with an assortment of costumes and harmless medieval weaponry.

Nr Helmsley, N.York YO6 5LB (01439-798 228). Adult, £3; £2.25 conc; child, £1.50; u-5s, free.

Peversey Castle

Commemorating the 930th anniversary of the landing at Peversey by Duke William of Normandy, battle lines will be drawn once again between Normans ad Saxons. Seething Saxons ousted from their homes will set up camp outside the castle with five-feet long broad axes. Inside, the 200 disciplined infantry-men and deadly archers of the Norman army prepare for battle from noon today and tomorrow. The full battle ensues at around 3pm each day, but waiting visitors can watch displays of horsemanship by the 12th light Dragoons (sporting Norman battle dress), or take a look at the day-to-day domestic life inside the Saxon camp.

Peversey, E.Sussex BN24 5LE (01323-762 604), 10am-6pm. Adult, £4; £3 conc; child, £2; u-5s, free.

Warwick Castle

Standing on the banks of the river Avon, this fine medieval castle played a pivotal role in the Wars of the Roses. It was also home to hunchbacked ruler Richard III, before he met his death at Bosworth. Tour gardens landscaped by Capability Brown or move inside for a look at Marie Antoinette's clock and Cromwell's death mask. Today the jailer will be guarding the Dungeons and Torture Chamber (always firm favourites with blood-thirsty kids) and a Red Knight patrolling the grounds on horseback.

Warwick Castle, Warwick, Warwickshire CV34 4QU (01926-495 421), 10am-6pm. Adult, £3.75; £6.50 conc; child, £5.25; family £24.50.

'I really liked the iguanas'

Nicola Swanborough visits Wyld Court, a tropical rainforest near Reading in Berkshire

Hampstead Norreys is a fairly typical English village: it has two pubs, no duck pond and a winding, cow-parsleyed B-road that encourages the drive-through-and-miss-it factor. It's an unlikely place to find a rainforest. Tucked on to the edge of the chalky Berkshire hills, low stone walls, gabled gates and clematis-covered doorways combine with late summer hay to paint a picture of rural Britain. A tamarin monkey would surely be quite out of place.

Three years ago, in an ambitious conservation project, a series of rapidly decaying glasshouses in the village were restored to house a slice of perilously threatened life: the rainforest. Today, thanks to a sophisticated, computer-controlled system which regulates three different rainforest climates, Wyld Court Rainforest flourishes.

While horses graze quietly in the fields outside, while an explosion of exotic plants twine themselves around one another within the glasshouses, unaware that they're a pane away from hostile frosts and biting winds.

Although primarily concerned with botanical life, Wyld Court also provides a home for some of the small mammals and creatures of the rainforest including exotic fish, tree frogs and iguanas. The tamarin monkeys have started to breed, a sure sign that the microcosmic project is mirroring real life.

This rainforest pulls no punches with its visitors: the fish bite, the plants are poisonous and children are not allowed to run. (The floor is often wet and slippery.)

On Monday the project is being handed over as a gift to the World Land Trust, enabling it to become a registered charity and look to the future with plans to extend. An educational centre is already in the pipeline.

The visitors

Lesley Steele-Perkins, a school health sister in east Berkshire, took her 11-year-old son Michael to Wyld Court Rainforest. Michael is a fish and reptile enthusiast.

Michael: I really liked the iguanas – they were the best bit – and the basilisk lizard. They can actually move, but you really have to look to see them as they are so well camouflaged. Seeing them in their aviary with plenty of places to hide and climb made me realise how little space our school iguana has to live in. He's in a sort of tank. It's given me a lot of ideas about how we could improve things for him and I'm going to have a word at school.

Lesley: Michael and I were fortunate enough to be the first visitors of the day when we went to Wyld Court. It was wonderful wandering through the three glasshouses with the rainforest to ourselves.

It was very atmospheric. You could hear the stillness of the forest and the rain dripping on the leaves. It's all very calm and peaceful.

The lowland tropical section really takes you by surprise. One minute you're admiring the plants and the next you are totally engulfed in a dense cloud of steam – it's impossible to see five yards in front of you.

The plants are incredible, and so diverse. I was quite stunned by how healthy and luscious they all look. A lot of them are related to the types of houseplants you can buy in the supermarket and then watch as the leaves die and fall off when you bring them home. But at Wyld Court all the species seem to flourish. A lot of them are actually at their best during our winter months, so it's a great place to go when it's cold and wet, especially as it's all inside.

My favourite plants by far were the giant lily-pads. They are so restful on the eye. Some of the species change colour and sex throughout

the day. The forest is always changing. There are several different types of tamarins – tiny monkeys which are all on the endangered species list. It really brings it home to you how important the rainforest is as a natural habitat for so many species, and how vital it is that we preserve what is left of them.

The whole of Wyld Court makes you want to draw up a chair and relax with a book – it's a very peaceful place. I love the gentle sound of the waterfall and the background tape of the rainforest requiem.

The deal

Location: Wyld Court Rainforest is in Hampshire near Newbury, Berkshire (01635 200221).

Price: adults, £3.50; senior citizens, £3; under 14s £2; under fives, free.

Opening times: March to October, 10am-5.30pm; November to February, 10am-4.30pm. Closed Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Facilities: toilets, drinks machine, picnic area – though no food available as yet. Wheelchair access – rainforest paths are good, if slippery. Gift shop: beautiful selection of tasteful books and gifts, all on the theme of the rainforest.

Warning: the rainforest is children-friendly but the plants and animals aren't. Many of the plants are poisonous, and there are a lot of deep tanks. Children should always be carefully watched to make sure they do not fall in.

Take a car and 5 people to France for £10 with THE INDEPENDENT

On 7 October The Independent will be celebrating its tenth anniversary. As part of the celebrations, we are offering every reader the chance to take a day trip to France to stock up for Christmas, with a car and up to five people for £10. You can take your car on Hoverspeed's Dover to Calais or Folkestone to Boulogne routes for only £10 (£20 on Saturdays), or alternatively, travel as a foot passenger on the Folkestone to Boulogne route and pay just 10p.

The season ticket allows you to take as many day trips from Dover to Calais or Folkestone to Boulogne as you like until 30 June 1997 with a car and up to five people for only £10 (£20 on Saturdays) each time you travel.

The normal day trip fare for foot passengers is £10 and the price for a car plus five people, £55. The Channel crossings with Hoverspeed are either aboard Hovercraft or SeaCat, both of which offer duty-free goods.

Exclusive to Independent readers, Hoverspeed is offering 10% off all duty and tax free goods when you spend over £30 in one transaction. A voucher will be supplied with your day trip tickets and is valid until 20 December 1996.

How To Qualify
To participate in our offer, you must collect four differently numbered tokens from the eight we will be printing in The Independent and the Independent on Sunday. You will need to complete a booking form (printed on Tuesday 1 and Saturday 5 October) and send it with your tokens and payment to the address shown on the booking form. Alternatively, for those travelling by car, once you have collected your tokens, you can make a credit card booking (up to 16 October) by calling Hoverspeed reservations. See Tuesday's booking form for further details.

Today we print Token 1; Token 2 will be printed in tomorrow's Independent on Sunday.

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9. Maximum of 5 people per car - no trailers, caravans, minibuses or transit sized vans are allowed.
10. EuroSave will endeavour to despatch tickets at least 10 days prior to departure.
11. Carriage by sea is subject to terms and conditions of the carrier, copies of which are available on request.
12. This offer is only valid for day trips, vehicles carrying overnight luggage will be refused at the port. A minimum of 4 hours must be spent in France.
13. Photocopies of tokens are not acceptable.



Investment trust discounts are a fact of life. It is a matter of temperament whether Investors choose to see them as an opportunity or a threat.

For anyone who holds shares in an investment trust, as an increasing number of private investors do, the issue of investment trust discounts is a perennial source of fascination – and often of frustration. Why do some trusts trade at a sizeable discount to their net asset value while others trade at a premium?

The question has long confounded the academic community, which likes to find definitive answers to financial conundrums of this sort.

For investors with real money to spend, the discount is a fact of life. It is a matter of temperament whether they choose to see discounts as an opportunity or a threat. The opportunity lies in the fact that discounts can fall as well as rise; when they do so, it gives the investor an additional return over and above any increase that the managers of his investment trust have obtained by their investment skills.

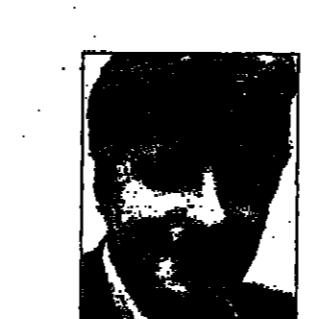
When they fall, on the other hand, discounts threaten investors

with the flip side of this double whammy effect. It is quite possible for the asset value of an investment trust to fall and for its discount to widen at the same time.

The result, in these unhappy circumstances, is that the share price – which represents the current value of the shareholder's investment – falls by a disproportionately large margin.

The thousands of investors who put their money into Kepit, the popular European privatisation investment trust run by Kleinwort Benson, are among those who have experienced an unhelpful discount movement. Unsurprisingly, trusts with the best track records and most highly regarded management tend to have the smallest discounts – unlike Kepit.

Fortunately for most investors, and indeed most investment trust managers, the recent record on discounts has been encouraging. On average, investment trust discounts have narrowed consistently over the past few years, as they tend to do in bull markets. (This part of the



JONATHAN DAVIS
INVESTMENTS

phenomenon, at least, is not in doubt.) Twenty-five years ago, at the peak of the last great bull market, investment trusts generally traded within 5 to 10 per cent of their asset values. At their nadir in the 1970s bear market, discounts widened to more than 30 per cent on average. Since then, the progress has been nearly all one way, in the right direction.

The average discount now is back up to the 9-10 per cent level, though this single figure hides a

wide range of divergent experience – ranging from Law Debenture and 3i, both trading at a premium, and Bankers' Trust (on a discount of 1.2 per cent), to RIT Capital (at 16.7 per cent).

Investment trust shares tend to outperform the stock market as a whole when share prices rise (as they did from 1987 to 1990, and from 1992 to 1994), and vice versa. The discount tends to follow a similar path, narrowing in periods of strong performance and widening when markets are dull or falling. According to the trust-watchers at brokers Credit Lyonnais Laing, this relationship holds over longer periods too, though discounts tend to be backward rather than forward-looking, reflecting the most recent past experience, not the likely future direction of the market.

This in turn creates some interesting short-term anomalies. In the early part of this year for example, the discount in many sectors failed to keep pace with the general movement of the market, creating

some good value opportunities, among the general trusts for example.

Experience shows that discounts can move quite rapidly over short periods of time. In the past year, for example, Foreign & Colonial has traded part of the time at a premium to net asset value, but also, at its low point, at a discount of 11 per cent.

In 1995, the discount movements over the year ranged from a positive improvement of 22 per cent to a 33 per cent deterioration – quite enough, in several cases, to offset the underlying change in the investment trust's portfolio.

One reason why this is the case, of course, is that the investment trust movement has grown so rapidly in the past 15 years that it is virtually unrecognisable from what it was in the 1970s. The emergence of specialist investment trusts, each one focusing on specific regions (eg Europe, the Far East) or types of investment (eg smaller companies), makes it much harder to generalise about the

investment trust sector as a whole. But the basic principles of investment trust investing remain the same. The decision to buy should be based on the fundamental suitability of the investment policy which the trust you like is pursuing. But in choosing between competing trusts in the same field, the level and recent history of the discount is a key secondary factor in deciding which trust is the better value.

At the moment, reckon Credit Lyonnais Laing, smaller companies and Japanese trusts both look quite good value on discount grounds. But they also rightly warn that it would be easy to be seduced into believing that the era of large discounts has gone for good.

In the short term, with the markets still looking quite robust, the risk of a serious downward correction is limited. But, although many investment management firms have become much more conscious of the need to manage their own discounts, the gearing effect of the discount factor is still there.

The high price of choosing the wrong savings scheme

There are startling differences in performance, says Nic Cicutti

Choosing the wrong insurer to look after your money can cost thousands of pounds, according to a new survey out this week. A combination of high charges and poor performance could actually leave investors nursing a loss after 10 years, the report on unit-linked savings plans points out.

Among the most startling difference in returns identified in the joint survey by Money Marketing, a financial magazine, and the accountancy firm KPMG, is the £51,061 produced on a £10,000 investment over 10 years by Skandia Life's Gartmore Hong Kong Fund. The same money invested for 10 years in the Allied Dunbar American Property Fund would have fallen to £8,947.

Unit-linked schemes are investment products used for a variety of purposes, including pensions, mortgage repayment schemes and savings plans. Sold by life insurance companies, they differ from with-profits endowment schemes in that they are more directly linked to the value of the equities in which they invest.

In recent years, unit-linked schemes have gained in popularity as some savers have become wary of the "smoothing" of investment returns provided by with-profits schemes.

This survey of unit-linked schemes, aimed at financial advisers, has used a new yardstick originally developed by the Office of Fair Trading, allowing savers to assess at a glance the 58 companies which have taken part in the survey.

Products are rated on a sliding scale from A+ to C- for three different characteristics – the amount paid back on early surrenders, mid-term surrenders and final maturity values. These characteristics allow savers to check both the charges levied on products and their actual investment performance.

The three ratings are grouped together to allow savers to see instantly which companies are good

PICK OF THE BUNCH			
Past performance – managed fund 10-year maximum investment plan (MIP)			
Company	Early surrender (2 years) mid-term surrender (5 years) maturity (10 years)	Company	Early surrender (3 years) mid-term surrender (10 years) maturity (25 years)
Critical Medical	A+	Abbey National Life	BAA
Friends Provident	BAA	Critical Medical	BAA
HMG Life	BAA	Legal & General	BAA
Marischal	BAA	Norwich Union	BBB
Skandia Life	BAA	Scottish Amicable	BAA
Standard Life	BAA	Scottish Widows	A+AA
Typical surrender and maturity figures		Standard Life	A+AA
2 years 10 years 25 years		Typical surrender and maturity figures	
Oct C- 2720 25,886 21,170		2 years 10 years 25 years	
2 in S 21,102 24,260 21,240		C in P 21,093 21,224 25,920	
B in S 21,483 24,266 21,515		C in B 31,747 31,465 32,173	
B in H- 21,584 25,226 21,785		B in A 22,412 21,568 21,520	
A in A+ 23,076 23,076 21,471		A in F+ 23,076 21,471 22,000	
Based on male aged 25 investing £100 a month. Assumes investment growth of 7.5% p.a., total price inflation of 4.5% p.a. and savings rising at 5% p.a.			

or bad. Generally, a company which manages to achieve a BBB rating or above can be considered reasonable.

Sandra Grandison, editor of the report, says: "The survey will enable financial advisers and consumers to judge the merits of the most suitable products not only by identifying companies that provide good returns on investments and have competitive charging structures but also by comparing [them] against each other."

It should be remembered, however, that these ratings are not the only areas to be considered. Product design, flexibility and service must also be taken into account."

The new rating system raises the question of what weight to give each individual aspect that it describes. For example, investors who are convinced that the stability of their financial lives is such that they are not likely to want to surrender their policies early can opt for a lower first letter (B- or C-) in return, where possible, for a higher final letter (B+ to A+).

Alternatively, savers who believe that low charges are more important

in the long-term than a fund's past performance can pick accordingly.

That still leaves the question of whether one is better served by looking at charges first and performance later, or vice versa.

John Jenkins, an actuary at KPMG who produced the report says: "My own personal feeling is that charges are the first thing to look at. It is asking a lot of a fund whose charges are 1 per cent higher than another to outperform it by that amount each year for 25 years."

However, Roddy Kohn, an independent financial adviser at Bristol-based Cougar, says: "Performance is one of those subjective pieces of information where you can prove anything with statistics. But the truth is that the right performance will outweigh charges."

Copies of the survey are available (£3.75 inc P&P) from Money Marketing Customer Services, St Giles House, 50 Poland Street, London W1V 4AX. Or call 0171 292 3707.

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- PCI Bus (either 16MHz or 33MHz) with 16Mb VRAM switchable to 2Mb for increased performance
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- Modem 14,400 bps with manual and CD
- Modem 14,400 bps with manual and CD
- CD-RW 4x 120Mb (either 16x or 24x)
- CD-RW 4x 120Mb (either 16x or 24x)
- Processor Enhanced Pentium Pro 90MHz
- Processor Enhanced Pentium Pro 100MHz
- Processor Enhanced Pentium Pro 120MHz
- Processor Enhanced Pentium Pro 133MHz
- Processor Enhanced Pentium Pro 150MHz
- Processor Enhanced Pentium Pro 166MHz
- Processor Enhanced Pentium Pro 180MHz
- Processor Enhanced Pentium Pro 200MHz
- Processor Enhanced Pentium Pro 233MHz
- Processor Enhanced Pentium Pro 250MHz
- Processor Enhanced Pentium Pro 266MHz
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money

Best borrowing rates

	Telephone	% Rate and period	Max Fee adv %	Incentive	Redemption penalty
Fixed rates					
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	0.20 for 1 year	85	0.75%	—
Finsbury BS	0800 080088	6.35 to 1/10/00	75	£295	—
Northern Rock	0800 591500	7.49 to 1/10/01	95	£295	—
Variable rates					
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	6.5% for 1 year	95	—	1st 5 yrs: 7.04% of sum repaid
Principality BS	01222 344188	3.50% to 1/11/98	75	—	To 30/10/01: discount reclaimed
Halifax BS	0800 101110	5.33 to 30/9/01	90	—	To 30/9/01: 1.4% of advance
First time buyers fixed rates					
Alliance & Leic BS	via local branch	2.10 to 1/10/97	95	0.5%	—
Skipton BS	01756 700511	4.75 to 30/9/98	95	£295	Unemployment Ins
TSB	via local branch	7.74 to 30/9/01	95	£50	Refund val fee
First time buyers variable rates					
Principality BS	01222 344188	1.00 to 1/11/97	90	—	To 31/10/01: discount reclaimed
Greenwich BS	0181 858 8212	3.49% for 2 years	95	£250	1st 5 yrs: discount reclaimed
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	4.24 to 1/10/99	95	£295	Refund val fee
1st 7 yrs: 5% of sum repaid					

Telephone APR % Max LTV Fixed monthly payments (£3,000 over 3 years)

Unsecured With insurance Without insurance

Direct Line 0141 248 9966 13.9 E £112.86 £101.33

Alliance & Leicester 0116 262 6262 14.8 £114.93 £102.36

Midland Bank 0800 180180 14.9 £115.82 £102.49

Secured (second charge)

Clydesdale Bank 0800 240024 7.5 Neg £2K - £15K 6 mths to 25 years

Royal B of Scotland 0131 523 7023 8.7 70% £2.5K - £100K 3 years to retirement

Barclays Bank 0800 000929 9.3/9.5 80% £10K - £75K 5 to 25 years

Telephone Authorised Unauthorised

Woolwich BS 0800 400900 Current 0.76 9.5 2.18 29.5

Alliance & Leicester 0500 950595 Current 0.76 9.5 2.20 29.8

Abbey National 0500 200500 Current 0.94 11.9 2.18 29.5

Telephone Card Type Min Rate APR Annual int. free period

Standard Co-operative Bank 0800 109000 Advantage Visa — 0.64N 7.90N nil 0 days

Robert Fleming/S&P 0800 829024 MasterCard/Visa — 0.8958 11.20 nil 0 days

RBS Advanta 0800 077770 Visa — 0.94N 11.90N nil 56 days

Gold cards

Co-operative Bank 0345 212212 Visa £20,000 0.4792 10.32 £120 46 days

RBS Advanta 0800 077770 Visa £20,000 0.54N 11.90N nil 56 days

Royal B of Scotland 01702 362890 Visa £20,000 1.05N 14.50N £35 46 days

Telephone Payment by direct debit

% pm APR % pm APR

John Lewis via store 1.39 18.0 1.39 18.0

Marks and Spencer 01244 681681 1.87 24.8 1.97 26.3

Sears via store 1.94 25.9 2.20 29.8

APR Annualised percentage rate. B+C Buildings and Contents Insurance LTV Loan to value ASU Accident, sickness and unemployment E Available to comprehensive motor insurance policyholders aged over 22 years.

N Introductory rate for a limited period.

All rates subject to change without notice.

Source: MONEYFACTS 01632 500677

26 September 1996

Best savings rates

	Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
Portman BS	01202 292444	Instant Access	Instant	£100	4.50	Year
Co-Operative Bank	0345 252000	Pathfinder	Instant	£5,000	4.75	Month
Direct Line	0181 567 1121	Instant Savings	Instant	£10,000	5.75	Year
Direct Line	0181 567 1121	Instant Savings	Instant	£50,000	5.75	Year
Teachers' BS	01202 887171	Billion	Postal	£500	4.80	1/2 Year
Alliance & Leic BS	0645 228858	Instant Direct	Postal	£5,000	5.40	Year
Bristol & West BS	0800 301109	Instant Access Postal	Postal	£10,000	5.85	Year
Bristol & West BS	0800 301109	Instant Access Postal	Postal	£25,000	6.05	Year
Nottingham BS	0115 956 4422	Direct Reserve	20 day P	£2,500	6.10	Year
Nottingham BS	0115 956 4422	Direct Reserve	20 day P	£10,000	6.20	Year
Nottingham BS	0115 956 4422	Direct Reserve	20 day P	£25,000	6.40	Year
Cheltenham & Gloucester	0800 717505	Direct 30	30 day P	£100	5.50	Year
Kleinwort Benson	01202 502404	RICA	Instant	£2,500	5.00	Month
Halifax BS	01422 335333	Asset Reserve	Instant	£10,000	4.00	Year
Chase BS	0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	4.35	Year
Chelsea BS	0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£25,000	4.65	Year
Bristol & West BS	0800 202121	Year Plus Bond	2/2/98	£5,000	6.25F	Maturity
Northern Rock BS	0500 565000	Postal Deposit Bond	31/12/98	£2,500	6.75F	Year
Bradford & Bingley BS	0800 525288	Millennium Bond	20/11/99	£1,000	7.00	Year
Stephens BS	0800 600310	Fixed Rate Bond	31/10/01	£5,000	7.55F	Year
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.50F	Year
NatWest Bank	0800 200400	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£5,000	7.45F	Year
Midland Counties BS	01322 747771	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£9,000	7.20	Year
Birmingham Midshires	0645 720721	Fixed Rate TESSA	5 years	£1,000	7.00	Year
AlG Life	0181 680 7172	1 year	£50,000	4.85FN	Year	
Financial Assurance	0181 380 3388	2 year	£50,000	5.60FN	Year	
Pinnacle Insurance	0181 207 9007	3 years	£30,000	5.80FN	Year	
Pinnacle Insurance	0181 207 9007	4 years	£30,000	6.10FN	Year	
Pinnacle Insurance	0181 207 9007	5 years	£30,000	6.50FN	Year	
Newcastle Bank Gibraltar	00 350 761681	Nova Access	Instant	£25,000	6.30	Year
Northern Rock, Guernsey	01481 714600	Offshore 30	30 day	£25,000	6.35	Year
Derbyshire DMO Ltd	01524 563432	90 Day Notice	90 Day	£25,000	6.55	Year
Northern Rock, Guernsey	01481 714600	Millennium Bond	1/1/00	£10,000	7.50F	Year
Investment Accounts			1 month	£20	4.75	Year
				£500	5.25	Year
			3 months	£2,000	6.00	Month
Income Bonds				£25,000	6.25	Month
Capital Bond		Series J	5 years	£100	6.65F	Maturity
First Option Bonds			12 months	£20,000	6.25F	Year
Pensioner's G'feed Income Bond		Series 3	5 year	£500	7.00F	Month
NS Certificates (tax-free)		43rd issue	5 year	£100	5.53F	Maturity
		9th Index Billed	5 year	£100	2.50-ri	Maturity
Children's Bond		Issue H	5 year	£25	6.75F	Maturity

P post only F fixed rate
A all withdrawals subject to 30 day loss of interest
All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice.

Source: MONEYFACTS 01632 500677. 26 September 1996

The Pru takes on banks and building societies

Nic Cicutti examines the insurer's promises on savings and mortgages

The next time you consider the possibility of opening a new deposit account or taking out a mortgage, who will you be giving your custom to? From next week, the Prudential hopes you will be making a beeline for its newly launched service.

The insurer is taking on banks and building societies at their own game, offering a range of home loans and two savings accounts which it claims beat the opposition into a cocked hat.

Initially, at least, the Pru is primarily hoping to convert its own existing customers to the new services it offers. The company has six million policyholders who receive payouts of £1bn each year in maturing investments.

Prudential's research shows that up to 70 per cent of that maturing money is still in the policyholders' building society accounts a year later. Clearly, grabbing a slice of that money back is what underpins the Pru's deposit accounts.

Similarly, the Pru's salespeople arrange £700m in mortgages for their clients every year. Except that until now the loans were arranged with other mortgage lenders. Again, diverting a chunk of that business back into its own coffers gives it a head-start when it comes to setting up a new bank.

The Pru hopes that the growing demand for telephone-based financial services – banking, mortgages or insurance – will allow it to offset the absence of a branch structure for its new bank. All the paraphernalia involved in a telephone operation are in place, with a new headquarters based in Dudley, in the West Midlands.

Martin Harris, chief executive at Prudential Banking, claims the products his new division is offering are those he once dreamed of when he worked at First Direct, the telephone bank launched by Midland Bank. He says customers have the benefit of knowing that they can contact any one of its 6,000 salespeople, who will there to help when needed.

But all the warm, friendly phone people

and helpful salespeople in the world are of little use if the product you are selling is not up to scratch. Here, the Pru looks a bit more ordinary than it claims.

Underpinning both the savings and mortgage offerings are a set of guarantees. On the savings side, the guarantee is that the interest rate paid will beat the average of branch-based deposit accounts on offer from the top 10 banks and building societies.

Translated into pound signs, this means for its High Interest Deposit Account, which offers instant access to your money, a rate of 3.1 per cent gross is paid on deposits above £500. This rises progressively to 4.75 per cent on savings levels above £100,000.

Prudential's 60-Day Notice Account pays

3.85 per cent gross on minimum deposits of £2,000, rising to 5.85 per cent for sums above £100,000. In the second instance, the rates include a 0.5 per cent loyalty bonus if in each 12 months that an account is opened no more than two withdrawals are made and the balance remains above £2,000.

The Pru's guarantee means that its rates are currently about 1 percentage point above the average of its rivals' branch-based deposit accounts. There are two problems, however. The first is that the guarantee only applies until the end of next year. One could argue that at least it is in place for the next 15 months.

The second problem is that the Pru, despite its protestations, is not comparing like with like. The rates paid on its instant access postal account are beaten by Alliance & Leicester, which pays 5.4 per cent gross on an admittedly high initial deposit of £5,000. This rises to 6.3 per cent gross on deposits above £100,000.

Birmingham Midshires is also ahead of the Pru on some of its postal account rates, offering slightly less. Others with better savings accounts are Bristol & West, Northern Rock, Yorkshire, First Direct and even Scottish Widows Bank, which was the first

insurer to set up a bank subsidiary and is now considering launching a mortgage range.

It is in the field of mortgages that the Pru does better, offering a range of reasonably priced loans. Although not quite the cheapest, they score highly in terms of their flexibility.

The Pru's variable rate is 6.99 per cent, with a discount of up to 0.7 per cent in place over the lifetime of the mortgage for loans with a loan-to-value ratio of 75 per cent, giving a true rate of 6.29 per cent. The interest charged rises to 6.69 per cent on a loan-to-value of 90 to 95 per cent. Repayment breaks are possible for up to six months.

The company also offers a variety of discounts and cashback deals and pledges that if cheaper rates become available they will be offered at the end of any discount period to both new and existing borrowers, unlike many other lenders. Mortgages are also transferable to a new home, while anyone switching to a Pru mortgage is offered a refund of their valuation fee, no booking or admin charges, and a special legal fees package.

More importantly, the Pru breaks with tradition in that it pledges not to operate a whole raft of hidden charges usually imposed by other lenders. Among the charges it refuses to impose are the full month's interest payable at whatever point in the month that a mortgage is taken out or repaid. In common with a handful of other lenders, it will credit any mortgage overpayments directly rather than at the end of the year. This means the actual cost of the loan falls more quickly.

As with Direct Line, the Pru also charges interest on a daily basis. In all, it estimates that its policy of openness will allow someone with a typical £50,000 mortgage to save over £600 during the loan's lifetime.

The Pru's entry into the telephone banking market is a bit of a curate's egg. But by stimulating competition among rivals, it may lead to better savings and mortgage products that all of us can take advantage of.



Moving house: The Pru offers mortgages that can be transferred to a new home

Photograph: John Lawrence

FEAR OF FINANCE

Nic Cicutti



Next week, I will be attending another of those august financial award dinners where everyone wears funny black suits and ties, eats indifferent food and listens to speeches. My host for the evening is Cornhill, the insurer well known for its cricket sponsorship.

Always being one to bite the hand that feeds me, I will be asking my hosts why it is that Cornhill declined to take part in the Money Marketing financial survey we write about elsewhere in this section.

Not just Cornhill. A number of other companies also refused to supply information to John Jenkins, the actuary at KPMG who helped bring out the survey. The refuseniks include Barclays Life, Hill Samuel, Irish Life, London & Manchester, Mercury Asset Management, Pearl, Refuge, Black Horse Financial Services, Sun Life of Canada, Royal Liverpool and National & Provincial Life, the building society's insurance arm now owned by Abbey National.

Between them, these companies have sold millions of policies to their customers. Yet they refused to let their names appear in these performance tables. According to John Jenkins, the argument tended to be that they no longer sold the specific policies for which details were being requested, so the information was not relevant.

Of course, that's true. But equally, so is the fact that many clients with the companies named above would like to know how their policies have fared compared with others.

It is not often that I plug a new idea. But this one, by Torquil Clark, a firm of financial advisers in Wolverhampton, sounds good. The firm is launching Protect Direct, a telephone service selling term assurance, a no-frills form of life cover increasingly popular as an adjunct to mortgages.

Term assurance is simple: you pay a premium each month. If you die within a certain period your estate gets an agreed sum. Because it is so simple, competition in this market is mainly based on price. Protect Direct adds value by rebating about 65 per cent of the commission normally paid to an adviser. In many cases, this is equal to a whole year's premium. If you ever need this type of insurance, it makes sense to call 0800 413186.

LOOSE CHANGE

Norwich and Peterborough Building Society is extending its fixed-price deal service in Abbey National shares following the bank's takeover of National & Provincial Building Society. Investors pay a flat fee of £20, plus £2 each for up to three family members pooling their shares. Details on 01603 622265.

British Homes Stores is launching a loyalty card entitling clients of the store to discounts of up to 15 per cent on purchases. Details from any BHS store.

ShareLink, the execution-only broker, is launching a Fostsie Bonus PEP, offering capital security, plus the value of any rise in the FT-SE 100 share index. An additional bonus of 25 per cent of the FT-SE 100 rise during the PEP's five-year life will also be paid. Call 0121 236 4848.

RBS Advanta is launching a new, no-fee Gold Visa Card with an APR of 11.9 per cent fixed until November 1997. The card includes a 56-day interest-free period, travel accident insurance and medical and legal helpline. Call 0800 07770.

Water Richmum, an insurance broker, is launching a £5,000 contents policy aimed at landlords who let their properties on a part-furnished basis. Call 01628 470.

The National Solicitors' Network has

launched a free phone line offering access to independent legal and financial advice for elderly people considering a move into care homes. Callers receive details of a solicitor near them who will offer a free initial consultation. Call 0800 998833.

Birmingham Midshires Building Society is launching a Guaranteed Income Plus retirement bond, paying 7.3 per cent fixed for five years. Call 0500 070707.

General Accident Life is offering a cashback mortgage with a variable rate of 6.99 per cent. Borrowers receive 5 per cent of their loan back, plus free mortgage indemnity on loans of up to 95 per cent of a home's value. Call 0800 100200.

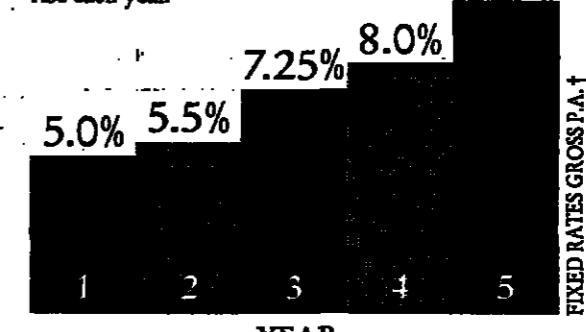
Investors Intelligence and AIG Life are launching a Guaranteed Japanese Bond offering a 100 per cent guarantee plus 100 per cent of the growth in the value of the Nikkei shares index, excluding dividends. The three and a half year bond has no basic rate income tax or CGT liabilities. Minimum investment is £5,000. Call 0800 300500.

Lloyds Bank is offering a Fifth High Income Deposit Fund, paying 6.3 per cent gross over two years and 5.7 per cent gross for one year. Monthly interest options are available. Minimum investment is £1,000. Details from all Lloyds Bank branches.

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staying in

Television by Gerard Gilbert

MONDAY

Wilderness 9pm ITV. Librarian Amanda Corrs (above) and her guilty secret – that once a month she turns into a wolf. ITV's big new drama, co-scripted by busy Andrew Davies (50/52).

Cutting Edge: The Test 9pm C4. Mini-cameras capture the experiences of two learner drivers. Fun, fun, fun (930t).

Film: Shadow Makers (Roland Joffé 1969 US) 11.25pm BBC1. Paul Newman helps develop the A-bomb in Joffé and Bruce Robinson's slightly preachy history lesson (52/71/60).

TUESDAY

A Question of Sport 8.30pm BBC1. Out go beady Botham and Billy Beaumont – in come Ally McCoist and John Parrott, new team captains in the ancient sports quiz (58/07).

It'swatch 9pm BBC2 (above). The Britons, French and Americans who rushed to join Uncle Jo's new Utopia and ended up in Stalin's gulags (90/1975).

Drop the Dead Donkey 10pm C4. Return of the TV newsroom comedy popular with real-life telly professionals. Will it still seem up to scratch post-Larry Sanders? (24/73/39).

WEDNESDAY

Autie's TV Favourites 8pm BBC1. The BBC's all-time best sitcoms, short-listed in the run-up to a 60th birthday bash next month (24/63).

Poldark 8pm ITV (above). The Cornish classic saga returns 20 years on, with Ross and Demelza to be found in the new forms of John Bowe and Mel Martin; Dickhard Poldark fans don't like it, but it's all prior tosh anyway (82/27).

Beck 9.30pm BBC1. Amanda Redman lights up this new drama about a missing persons bureau in London's Kings Cross (2/29/37).

THURSDAY

Dosō 8pm C4 (above). More ways to save and make money, with Adam Faith. First up – how to cash in on your home ideas, dress yourself stylishly from charity shops and get the best deal on a first-time mortgage (7/35).

Film: David's Mother (Robert Altman 1994) 10pm C4. Kristie Alley widens her dramatic range as the mother of an autistic boy (59/57/70).

Film: Strange Cargo (Frank Borzage 1940 US) 3.10am C4. Joan Crawford and Clark Gable at large on a French penal colony (45/19/26).

FRIDAY

Garden Doctors 8pm C4. A new casebook opens with a British garden lashed by wind and water (7/22).

Haven't Seen You for You 10pm BBC2. Paul Marston (above) is back from his ill-fated foray into Galton and Simpson-land, as the enduring comedy news quiz returns (61/159).

Film: The Times of Harvey Milk (Robert Epstein 1984 US) 12.30am BBC2. Excellent documentary about the gay San Francisco city supervisor, shot dead in 1978 (33/495).

Radio

by Robert Hanks

American Faith 7.45pm R4. Mike Walker's drama has the subtitle "Richard Milhous Nixon's Road to Watergate", which sums up this attempt to get inside the skin of one of the most fascinating figures in US history.

Woodentops 8pm R2. Ventriloquism loses a lot of its magic on the radio, but this is a surprisingly riveting look at the art, from its ancient roots to its modern flowering. Presented by Ray Alan and Lord Charles.

Bodies of Evidence 8pm R4. Tony Robinson has mysteriously cornered the market in popular archaeology. This looks at exactly how scientists gain information from the prehistoric bodies dug out of peat bogs and glaciers.

I'm the Queen of Sheba 6.40pm R4. Ken Livingstone MP hosts a new comedy panel game, supposedly on the theme of king but not readily distinguishable from a lot of other comedy panel games. Moderate hilarity.

At the Shoulder of History 10am R4 FM. Bruce Boaglin, official UN interpreter in Yugoslavia, talks about the difficulties of helping world leaders and warring states to communicate with each other.

Sunday television and radio

BBC1

- 7.30 Moon (R) (94/61542).
- 7.55 Playdays (R) (S) (26/39726).
- 8.15 20 Steps to Better Management. (New Series) Improve your "people skills" (S) (658/504).
- 8.30 Breakfast with Frost. Shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown and Baroness Castle are the pre-Labour conference guests (74/271).
- 9.30 Harvest Thanksgiving. From St Patrick's, Coleraine, Co Londonderry (S) (78/2504).
- 10.15 See Hear! Chat Show Special (S) (82/2504).
- 10.45 Deutsch Plus. Speak better German (525/165).
- 11.00 The Eleventh Hour (S) (48/8097).
- 12.30 On the Record. John Prescott (25/6293).
- 1.30 EastEnders Omnibus (R) (S) (53/51670).
- 2.55 Escape to Witch Mountain (John Hough 1974 US). Superior Disney children's movie, starring Eddie Albert, Ray Milland and Donald Pleasence (34/22090).
- 4.30 Junior MasterChef 96. Sally James and Alan Coren munch their way through the contestants' dishes (S) (900).
- 5.00 People's Century. Peoples' memories of the fall of Europe's colonial empires (S) (76/75252).
- 5.55 News, Weather (28/227).
- 6.15 Regional News (63/9875).
- 6.20 Songs of Praise. The programme celebrates its 35th birthday in Birmingham (S) (92/5900).
- 6.55 The Great Antiques Hunt. Jilly Goolden and team are in Yorkshire (S) (3/21287).
- 7.40 Pie in the Sky. Richard Griffiths' restaurateur sleuth investigates a series of racist attacks at his local Chinese take-away (S) (40/9368).
- 8.30 The Legacy of Reginald Perrin. Not a good one, by the looks of things. This week, C's attempts to be absurd (S) (82/87).
- 9.00 Rhodes. S. Rhodes has a cunning plan concerning his greatest rival (S) (10/4542).
- 9.55 News, Weather (58/9368).
- 10.10 The Mrs Merton Show. Peter Stringfellow, Desmond Lynam and Roif Harris (R) (36/7232).
- 10.40 Heart of the Matter: God under the Microscope. (New Series) Richard Dawkins, Baroness Warock, David Starkey and various philosophers and theologians air the science v religion debate in the Czech Republic. See preview, p26 (11/8726).
- 11.20 Film: Jimmed! (Don Siegel 1982 US). Well, this meeting of action movie director Siegel and the outrageous Bette Midler certainly was. It's all to do with a gambler who thinks he's jinxed a casino owner, but I shouldn't lose any sleep over it. The lovely Rip Torn co-stars (74/4436).
- 1.00 Weather (29/3011). To 1.05am.
- REGIONS: Wales: 4.55pm Scrum 5. Scot: 4.55pm Sportscene Rugby Special. 9.00 Snooker. 10.30 Gypsy Passion. 11.30 Film: Shane. 12.00pm Landward.

BBC2

- 6.15 Open University: Operating Systems (27/14320).
- 6.40 Maths Models and Methods (4/196879).
- 7.05 Out of the Melting Pot (96/50271). * 7.55 The Right Course for You? (26/13220). * 8.20 LA: City of the Future (1/10900).
- 9.10 Children's BBC: Eek the Cat. 9.40 The Itsy Bitsy Spider. 9.40 The Mask. 10.05 Ship to Shore. 10.35 Grange Hill. 11.00 The Demon Headmaster. 11.25 Small World. 11.45 Izangoud. 12.00 Count Three and Pray (George Shrimpton). A wild child survives the horrors of the mountains. Stars Joanne Woodward (53/610).
- 1.40 Sunday Grandstand: 1.45 Yachting highlights of the second round of races in the Ultra 30s series. 2.15 Racing from Ascot: the 2.35 Royal Lodge Stakes, the 3.10 Mail on Sunday Championship Mile Handicap, and the 3.50 Fillies' Mile. 4.05 Athletics: the IAAF World Half-Marathon Championships from Palma, Majorca. 4.20 Racing from Ascot: the 4.25 Tots Sunday Special Handicap. 4.35 Athletics (S) (306/72368).
- 4.55 Rugby Special. Highlights of Richmond v Newcastle (S) (65/29/62).
- 5.55 The Car's the Star. The Austin Healey (38/7829).
- 6.15 The BT Glass Challenge. (New Series) Being a 30,000-mile voyage for 14 yachts (S) (64/6368).
- 6.45 Star Trek: Voyager (S) (24/2349).
- 7.30 Promised Land. Continuing this fine series about the migration of black Americans from the Deep South to the north between 1940 and 1970. This week, the appeal of Chicago (56/3504).
- 8.20 The Money Programme. (New Series) A report on Korean electronics group, LG, which is bringing 6,000 jobs to South Wales (S) (46/7542).
- 9.00 Gypsy Passover. Documentary tracing the rise of dancer Joaquin Cortes, who's made it his mission to restore the animal passion to flamenco (29/00).
- 10.00 Shame (George Stevens 1953 US). Myth-making in the Old West, in which chivalrous Alan Ladd befriends Wyoming ranchers and defeats the forces of darkness (Jack Palance and chums). A big, popular, weepie western (41/9078).
- 11.55 The Stolen Children (Gianni Amelio 1992 It/H/Sw). Sentimental Italian tale of a couple forced to leave a pair of delinquent kids. Followed by Weatherview (28/8455). * To 1.55am.
- 2.00 The Learning Zone. Channel Hopping 5.8 (43/6363). 4.00 Languages: Introducing Deutsch Plus/The French Experience II (43/5471). 5.00 Business and Work (37/130). 5.30 Business Matters (9/3011). * To 6.00am.
- REGIONS: Wales: 4.55pm Scrum 5. Scot: 4.55pm Sportscene Rugby Special. 9.00 Snooker. 10.30 Gypsy Passion. 11.30 Film: Shane.

ITV/London

- 6.00 GMTV: 6.00 The Sunday Review. 6.30 News, Sport and Weather. 7.00 The Sunday Programme (32/177).
- 8.00 Dragon Flyz. Animation (1/457833).
- 8.25 Disney Club. The guests are pop band 911 (S) (21/54215).
- 10.15 Link (S) (4/307610). *
- 10.30 Morning Worship. From St Mary's, Wirksworth, Derbyshire (S) (19/631).
- 11.30 Heavenly Voices. Hymns written by Victorian American evangelists (S) (58/09542).
- 11.50 Your Faith and Mine. A young Hindu invites a Reform Jew to spend a day with him at the Hari Krishnas Headquarters (S) (48/5875).
- 12.30 CrossTalk (Followed by LWT Weather) (22/962). 1.00 News and Weather (17/661/26). *
- 1.10 Jonathan Dimbleby. (New Series) With the chair of Labour's National Policy Forum, Robin Cook. Have we, he asks, seen the high tide of "New Labour" (S) (16/77879).
- 2.00 War and Remembrance (S) (78/5146).
- 3.40 The Vikings (Richard Fleischer 1958 US). Big cast (Tony Curtis, Kirk Douglas, Ernest Borgnine, Janet Leigh), and big cinematography (Jack Cardiff) of Norwegian and British locations. The rest is rape and pillage (59/0165).
- 5.40 London Tonight Special. Reports on London Fashion Week (Followed by LWT Weather) (56/7726). *
- 6.25 News and Weather (6/44707). *
- 6.35 The Cosy Mysteries (4/50271). *
- 7.30 Heartbreak. A robbery at a wine and spirits warehouse (S) (70/726). *
- 8.30 You've Been Framed! (S) (8/405). *
- 9.00 London's Burning. Recall is rushed to hospital as the factory fire rages (S) (67/626). *
- 10.00 Tarrant on TV (S) (5/5320). *
- 10.30 News and Weather (Followed by LWT Weather) (13/6784). *
- 10.45 The South Bank Show. Braggars has a word with Michael Crawford (S) (9/72455). *
- 11.45 Personal Services (Terry Jones 1987 US). The life and times of luncheon voucher madame, Cynthia Payne, are loosely reworked into this energetic low comedy starring Julie Walters and Alec McCowen (S) (3/7813).
- 1.45 Sedette (Ken Hughes 1978 US). Slapstick story of a Hollywood glamour queen whose ex-husbands keep popping up during her latest honeymoon. Starring Mavis West, Tony Curtis, Ringo Starr, Dom DeLuise, Timothy Dalton and George Hamilton (75/3924).
- 3.25 Not Far Away (R) (S) (305/4856).
- 4.25 Night Shift (R) (S) (69/21011).
- 4.35 Flux (R) (S) (67/49/50). To 5.30am.

Channel 4

- 6.05 The American Football Big Match (S) (3081165).
- 7.00 Madeline (S) (3/6252).
- 7.30 The Real Life Adventures of Professor Thompson (28/287).
- 8.00 Street Sharks (S) (3/257815).
- 8.25 Two Stupid Dogs (S) (9/65587).
- 8.50 Cadillacs and Dinosaurs (S) (14/36184).
- 9.20 Saved by the Bell (R) (17/52469). *
- 9.45 Sister Sister (S) (8/2023).
- 10.15 Happy Days (R) (30/70691).
- 10.40 Hollyoaks Omibus (S) (39/4233). *
- 11.40 The Waltons (S) (77/2707). *
- 12.40 Young Man with a Hom (Michael Curtiz 1949 US). As it were. In fact this is a vivid drama, loosely based on the life of the legendary jazz musician, Big Beiderbecke. Lauren Bacall looks a bit too class to be a jazz moll (50/08691). *
- 2.45 Football Italia. Lazio v Parma (90/475829).
- 5.05 Munro. Oscar-winning animation from the 1960s about a four-year-old drafted into the army (7/300539).
- 5.15 Big Deal at Dodge City (Fielder Cook 1966 US). Henry Fonda being mild-mannered again, this time as a farmer and ex-gambler who buys into the biggest annual poker game in Laredo and, following a heart attack, persuades his distraught wife to play his hand. Joanne Woodward is she – backed up by James Roberts and Burgess Meredith (38/84558).
- 7.00 Equinox. Why did the Neanderthal Man suddenly die? See preview p26 (S) (8/184). *
- 8.00 Nothing But the Truth (S) (45/404). *
- 9.00 Leaving Home. Conductor Simon Rattle re-appraises the orchestral music of our century. See preview, p26 (S) (4368). *
- 10.00 Scandal (Michael Cator-Jones 1989 UK). Cator-Jones's neat evocation of London on the cusp of becoming swinging. He has less success with the Perfume Scandal, with Joanne Whalley-Kilmer virtually unreadable as Christine Keeler and John Hurt as the sacrificial victim, Stephen Ward. See big picture, p26 (S) (79/11977). *
- 12.10 Erotic Tales: Wet. Director Bob Rafelson tries his hand at being erotic, and in the shapey and seductive actress Cyndy Williams he has an advantage. Williams plays a mysterious woman who turns up at a bath showroom after hours demanding personal services (S) (14/31301).
- 12.40 Partners. US sitcom (S) (62/1856). *
- 1.10 Madame De Max Ophuls (1953 FR). Set the video for this luscious and sophisticated tale of love amongst the aristos. Charles Boyer and Vittorio De Sica were never better (70/9943).
- 3.00 Late Night Animation (24/56). To 3.30am.

ITV/Regions

- NEWMARKET** As London except. 2.00pm The Blenheim International Horse Trials (9/85/4). 3.00 The Making of Escape Irons LA - Stake is Back (2/6/71). 3.30 Film: The Incredible Hulk Returns (2/78/1). 5.15 The Last Days of Pompeii (2/10/5). 6.00 The Last Days of Pompeii (2/10/5). 6.15 Film: Death Us Do Part (5/4/23). 1.35am The Loop (9/76/37). 2.10am Best of British Motorsport (37/86/19). 2.40am Funny Business (2/59/2). 3.15am Cyber Cafe (2/59/2). 3.40-4.40am The Crime Hour (53/230).
- NOTTINGHAM** As London except. 12.30am Channel 3 North East Newsweek. (2/78/45). 2.00 Murder, She Wrote (7/19/84). 2.30 Film: The Thin Red Line (2/25/29). 3.15am The Loop (9/76/37). 4.45pm British Formula 1 Drivers' Association (2/25/29). 5.50pm The Thin Red Line (2/25/29). 6.45pm Channel 3 North East, sequela DSV (15/36/51). 7.00pm Poetry in Motion: The Making of James and the Giant Peach (2/25/29). 8.15 pm Xmas Jumper (56/59/7). 9.00pm The Thin Red Line (2/25/29). 11.45pm Film: Till Death Us Do Part (5/4/23). 1.35am The Loop (9/76/37). 2.10am Best of British Motorsport (37/86/19). 2.40am Funny Business (2/59/2). 3.10am Cyber Cafe (2/59/2). 3.40-4.40am The Crime Hour (53/230).
- SCOTLAND** As London except. 12.25pm What's New (2/57/84). 2.25pm The Listing (2/39/13/38). 2.30pm Held in Trust (5/4/4). 3.00pm Carbon (7/73/92). 3.05 The Bentham International Horse Trials (7/83/4). 3.20pm The Thin Red Line (2/25/29). 3.30pm The Thin Red Line Update (7/68/94). 11.45pm Film: Till Death Us Do Part (5/4/23). 1.35am The Loop (9/76/37). 2.10am Best of British Motorsport (37/86/19). 2.40am Funny Business (2/59/2). 3.10am Cyber Cafe (2/59/2). 3.40-4.40am The Crime Hour (53/230).
- WESTMORLAND** As London except. 12.25pm Westcountry (2/75/4). 2.00 Westcountry Update (1/1/6). 2.30 Nick Owen's Sunday Best (5/1/2). 3.00 Film: The Bleeding Heart (2/25/29). 3.30pm Film: The Thin Red Line (2/25/29). 5.50pm The Thin Red Line Update (7/68/94). 11.45pm Film: Till Death Us Do Part (5/4/23). 1.35am The Loop (9/76/37). 2.10am Best of British Motorsport (37/86/19). 2.40am Funny Business (2/59/2). 3.10am Cyber Cafe (2/59/2). 3.40-4.40am The Crime Hour (53/230).
- SC** As C4 except. 7.00am Early Morning (5/92/54). 7.10 Hollyoaks (3/92/23). 12.40pm Round a Round (2/25/29). 1.35pm Film: The Thin Red Line (2/25/29). 2.30pm The Thin Red Line (2/25/29). 3.00pm Film: Holly Pop (2/37/92). 3.10 Baby 5 (5/10/504). 4.05 Party of Five (7/71/93). 5.00 News (9/36/78). 6.05 Mandibles (7/58/32). 5.35 Pool o' Cinn (5/20/46). 7.00 Film: The Thin Red Line (2/25/29). 7.30pm Film: The Thin Red Line (2/25/29). 8.35 Leech Da (5/37/23). 8.20 News (5/37/27). 9.30 Cellular Icons: The Street (4/36/2). 10.00 Film: Blue Steel (3/04/46). 11.55-1.30am Film: Chungsong Express (6/35/29).

Radio



Choice

Radio 3 spends the day celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Third Programme with concerts, features and archive material – including the station's first-ever programme, advice from Stephen Potter and Joyce Grenfell (left) on How to Listen (around 3.40pm R3).

Radio 4

- 12.15 Record Review. 1.30 Through the Night. 1.31 Bruckner and Blomstedt. 2.50 Prague Spring Trio. 4.30 Verac Sevaren (organ). 5.00-6.00am Sequence.
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- Radio 5
- 1.00 Sunday Papers. 1.15 All in the Mind. 1.45 Breakaway. 1.55 The Spirit of America. (3/5). 11.45 Seeds of Faith. 12.00 News. 12.20 Births on Sunday. 12.30 Late Story. A Bit of Company. By Colin Greenland. 12.48 Shopping Forecast. 1.00-6.00am As World Service.
- Radio 5
- 1.00 The World This Weekend. 1.55 Shipping Forecast. 2.00 Gardeners' Question Time

**The big picture**

Scandal
Sun 10pm C4

Despite Ian McKellen's absurd bald wig in the part of Profumo, this is a slickly-made version of his affair with showgirl Christine Keeler (Joanne Whalley-Kilmer) which helped bring down the Conservative Government in 1964. Michael Caton-Jones's direction is stylish, and he is well-served by a strong cast featuring John Hurt as the louche osteopath Stephen Ward, and Bridget Fonda as Mandy 'well, he would say that' Rice-Davies.

Television preview

RECOMMENDED VIEWING THIS WEEKEND
by Gerard Gilbert

It's official – national politicians are about to go the way of the dinosaurs. Arthur C Clarke says so on a live satellite link from his home in Sri Lanka to the Science Museum in London, a means of communication he prophesied over 50 years ago. Tony Blair? John Major? Who cares? International business certainly doesn't.

Clarke appears on Simon Hoggart's new three-part series *The Hollow State* (Sat BBC2) looking into the globalisation of the economy. What this means in practice is that a businessman from Telford can manufacture supermarket carrier bags in China from polythene produced in Malaysia on machines made in Denmark. These are then imported to Britain for use in a supermarket in Telford. Where it all leads is anybody's guess, and we'll have to wait three weeks for Hoggart's – but it certainly puts the concerns of Eurosceptic MPs into perspective. Rather like a brontosaurus worrying about fleas.

After such profoundly materialistic concerns, the centuries-old debate (if that is the right word – Galileo might demur) between science and religion seems

strangely arcane. *Heart of the Matter* (Sun BBC1), has a Joan Bakewell-staffed debate, featuring amongst others, religion-bashing scientist Richard Dawkins, Baroness Mary Warnock and (why does one think "inevitably") David Starkey. Is no moral maze deemed worth exploring nowadays without Starkey's scowling contributions?

Starkey calls human beings "pattern-making" creatures. He obviously hasn't listened to many 20th century orchestral composers. Neither have I (an early encounter with Olivier Messiaen left me bruised), but I will now, after the first part of Simon Rattle's ambitious new series on 20th-century composers, *Leaving Home* (Sun C4). The outgoing musical director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra calls his first programme *Dancing on a Volcano*, which refers to Alban Berg's comment about the carnival crowds in Munich on the night of the Reichstag fire of 1933.

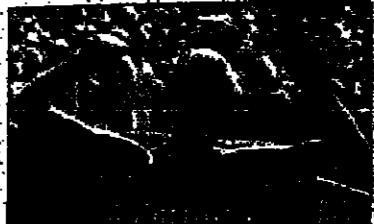
Rattle has already come under attack from an unlikely alliance of highbrow modern music critics and Albert Hall flagwavers aghast at his ignoring great British composers like Elgar and Vaughan Williams.

The Hollow State Sat 8.10pm BBC2**Divided Memories** Sat 9pm BBC2**Equinox** Sun 7pm C4**Leaving Home** Sun 9pm C4**Heart of the Matter** Sun 10.40pm BBC1

But he makes it clear from the start that his brief is the abandonment of morality, not a general overview. He makes a perfectly related guide, albeit given to generalisation and the odd cliché. On the Vienna of Hitler, "it always decay smells sweet". Does it?

For a more memorable film, *Divided Memories* (Sat 9pm) is a so-called "retrieved memory" of the 1960s, a film of "lost" memories and the strange, absolute self-delusion of the therapist who is creating more and more people that we never had as children and have since forgotten, the longer one is in "therapy", the more false memories – and a surprising number of them, in bizarre scenarios. Meanwhile, many of us are losing jobs and families.

American tennis never happened to Neanderthal Man and instead he is back playing for Wimbledon. *Equinox* (Sun 7pm) is an intriguing mystery story that suggests the might have come into fatal contact with a terrorist plot with more advanced communications than ours, by the way. Simon Hoggart would probably say he is alive and well and living in the Palace of Westminster.

**The big game****World Half Marathon Championships**

Sun 4.05pm, 4.30pm BBC1

There is no doubt that Liz McColgan (above) is the Scot's best medal hope. In this year's London Marathon, former world 10,000m champion did not fare so well in the humidity of the Atlanta Olympics, but she was suffering from an insect bite that day. In Palma, Majorca, tomorrow afternoon she is seeking to regain the IAAF World Half Marathon Championship she won in 1992. Don't bet against her.

Saturday television and radio

BBC1

- 7.00 Bay City (R) (S) (7764654).
- 7.25 News, Weather (275554).
- 7.30 Children's BBC: The Morph Files. 7.40 Robinson Sacro. 8.05 The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest.
- 8.30 *The New Adventures of Superman*. Superman promises not to use his powers while on holiday with Lois. How sweet! (R) (S) (351959).
- 9.15 *Live and Kicking* Guests include singer Peter "the pects" Andre, and *London's Burning* star Sean Blowers talking about his plans to sail round the world. (S) (81661596).
- 12.12 *Weather* (7774916).
- 12.15 Grandstand. 12.20 Football Focus. 1.00 News. 1.05 Cricket Focus. 1.20 Boxing: last night's Commonwealth flyweight championship fight between Peta Cuthaw and Jack Russell. 1.50 Racing from Ascot: the 2.00 Cumberland Lodge Stakes. 2.35 Diamond Stakes. 3.20 Queen Elizabeth II Stakes. 3.35 Total Festival Handicap. 4.05 Motor Sport: rounds 25 and 26 of the AutoTrader RAC British Touring Car Championship from Brands Hatch. 4.40 Final Score (77460374).
- 5.00 News, Weather (3043312).
- 5.30 Regional News and Weather (267515).
- 5.35 Dad's Army (R) (600633).
- 6.05 Jim Davidson's Generation Game. A hot-air balloon has to be folded in less than two minutes – and other such fun and games (S) (965409).
- 7.05 Due South (S) (691732).
- 7.50 The National Lottery Live. Luther Vandross performs his new single (S) (232567).
- 8.05 Casualty. More hospital grief. A lad trying to steal rare bird eggs gets stuck up a cliff face, and a woman puts sleeping pills in her husband's drink. As you do (S) (294664).
- 8.55 News and Sports Weather (Followed by National Lottery Update) (932664).
- 9.15 *Lethal Intent* (Bradford May 1995 US). The most overworked adjective in movie title history gets another outing in this unlikely nonsense about a long-lost (and formerly violent) father re-entering the life of his successful lawyer son and whisking him off on a hunting trip. Starring Andy Griffith and John Ritter (553645).
- 10.45 Match of the Day. Everton v Sheffield Wednesday is the main event (S) (3833041).
- 11.50 They Think It's All Over (S) (209393).
- 12.20 Top of the Pops (1272184).
- 12.55 *The Hellfire Club* (Robert S Baker and Monty Berman 1961 UK). Keith Michell tries to reclaim his father's estate, the Hellfire Club, years after running away to join the circus. Depraved cousin Peter Arne is out to stop him (1458946).
- 2.25 Weather (5070287).
- REGIONS: Scot: 12.15pm Grandstand from Scotland: 1.05 Motor Sport. 1.25 Snooker. 10.45 Sportscene Match of the Day. 11.45 Snooker. 12.45 They Think It's All Over. 1.15 Film: *The Hellfire Club*. 2.45 Weather.

BBC2

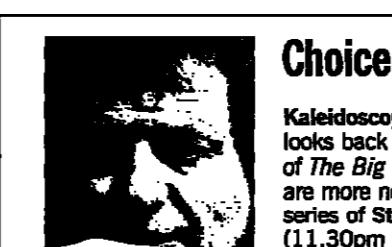
- 6.00 Open University: Computing (2822393). 6.25 The Spanish Chapel, Florence (2841428). 7.15 Pelizzetti Venezia, Rome: A Cardinal's Palace (7785157).
- 7.40 The Search for the W and V (5651596).
- 8.05 Culture and Society in Victorian Britain (3653616). 8.30 Open Mind: The Eco-Warriors (2187750). 8.55 Horses for Courses: An Evolutionary Radiation (2106886). 9.20 The Sordid Story of Boeuf Bourguignon (1454859).
- 9.45 Resources, Environment and Politics (6547480). 10.10 Surviving the Exam (3182480). 10.35 Wendeupunks (1213645).
- 11.25 *The World's Best Athlete*? (5063770).
- 11.25 Giochi: The Arena Chapel (6332664).
- 12.15 *Holiday Outings*. Valencia (7704157).
- 12.20 East Anglian Gardener. Hoveton Hall in Norfolk (7785022).
- 12.30 Film with Barry Norman. *Last Men Standing*. Multiplicity. Jane Eyre re-Bazza'd from last Monday (S) (350003).
- 1.00 *Shanghai Express* (Josef von Sternberg 1932 US). "It took more than one man to change my name to Shanghai Lily", and all that, as Marlene Dietrich and lover Clark Gable fall into the hands of a Chinese bandit. Stylish and sly (5756838).
- 2.20 *Destry Rides Again* (George Marshall 1939 US). Dietrich again, revitalising her career by going West, and playing the quixotic dance hall girl Frenchy in this satirical western in which sheriff James Stewart tries to charm an unruly town into lawfulness (3297138).
- 3.50 *Star Trek: Voyager*. Pilot episode for the latest Star Trek series (R) (7480585).
- 5.20 *TOTP 2* (S) (6081138).
- 6.05 Rhodes. 2/8. Second sitting of the epic. Our empire-builder has a homo-erotic brush with a trainee clerk (S) (761454).
- 7.00 News and Sport: Weather (904954).
- 7.15 Correspondent. Charles Wheeler and Martin Bell report on the mood of the American people on the run up to the US elections (S) (613954).
- 8.00 What the Papers Say. Russell Davies reads the newspapers (S) (834549).
- 8.10 *The Hollow State*. See Preview (S) (299119).
- 9.00 *Fine Cut: Divided Memories*. See Preview (S) (69353).
- 10.30 *Cloak Up: The Killing Fields and Citizen Kane* (R) (S) (238645).
- 10.45 *Stanley and Iris* (Marti Ritt 1989 US). Romance most memorable for casting Robert de Niro and Jane Fonda together (S) (60077645).
- 12.25 *The Scarlet Empress* (Josef von Sternberg 1934 US). The third Marlene Dietrich movie of the day is Von Sternberg's obsessional exercise in style, with Dietrich as Catherine the Great of Russia (Followed by *Weatherview*) (2317077). To 2.15am.
- REGIONS: Scot: 2.20pm The Oprah Winfrey Show. 3.00 Conference 96.

ITV/London

- 6.00 GMTV 7.00 News. 6.10 *Mole in the Hole*. 6.30 Professor Bubble. 6.40 *Bob Alert*. 7.10 Disney's *Wake Up in the Wild Room*. 8.20 *Gargoyles*.
- 9.25 *Wool*. Martin Clunes sets off on a sponsored drive in a camper van to raise money for the Bonne Foundation. And Paul Bradley, aka EastEnders' Nigel, visits the studio with his band (band 1863439).
- 11.00 *The Noise*. Luther Vandross (see *National Lottery Live*) and Liverpool footballer Jamie Redknapp are the guests (S) (2596).
- 11.30 *The Chart Show* (S) (524248).
- 12.30 *The Black Music Awards* Boy George, Lisa Parson, Mica Paris and Shola Ama are among the hosts at Le Palace in Hammersmith as the annual Black Music Awards are televised for the first time. The categories are soul, R & B, jazz, reggae, and hip-hop (R) (62157).
- 1.00 *News & Weather* (76090935).
- 1.05 Local News, Weather (7609206).
- 1.10 Movies, Games and Videos (5805549).
- 1.45 *Flight 80 – the Concorde* (David Lowell Rich 1979 US). Concorde flies from Washington via Paris to Moscow with members of the Russian and American Olympic teams on board in this late-in-the-game disaster movie. A motley crew includes Alain Delon, Robert Wagner, Sylvia Kristel and George Kennedy (49158461).
- 3.50 *Thunder in Paradise* (S) (6340683).
- 4.45 News, Sports Weather (7573003).
- 5.05 London Tonight: Sports Results (Followed by LWT Weather) (8714206).
- 5.20 *New Baywatch* (New Series) The ITV autumn schedules really kick in with the return of the following three favourites... (S) (7786312).
- 6.15 *Gladiators* (S) (890393).
- 7.15 *Blind Date* (S) (856577).
- 8.15 *Family Fortunes* (S) (116683).
- 8.45 *Weather: Lottery Result* (Followed by LWT Weather) (709575).
- 9.00 Brian Conley – Alive and Dangerous (S) (4461).
- 10.00 *Sunset* (Blake Edwards 1988 US). Decidedly uncharitable costume comedy with Bruce Willis playing real-life movie cowboy Torri Mix, who's being coached in preparation for the advent of talkies by Wyatt Earp (played by a quietly upstaging James Garner). Marlon Brando and Malcolm McDowell co-star (S) (6312).
- 10.30 *Cloak Up: The Lady Fugitives* (Bradford May 1989 US). A woman disappears after a horse-riding accident, only to return home two years later. Unable to account for her absence, she turns detective and discovers that she has had a lover and another life. Donna Mills stars, naturally (234524).
- 1.00 *Shades of Desire*. Inter-racial lesbian couples (S) (1494936).
- 1.20 *Linger* (R) (S) (8388707).
- 1.35 *Butch/Femme*. How relevant is the notion of butch or femme identities to lesbians today? On this evidence, tediously so (R) (2928184).
- 2.20 *Double Entente* (R) (S) (3946252).
- 2.30 *Grand Hotel* (Edmund Goulding 1932 US). This impossibly glamorous artifice is an omnibus collection of stories featuring the guests at a luxury Berlin hotel: Greta Garbo, John Barrymore, Lionel Barrymore, Joan Crawford and Wallace Beery (59287). To 4.30am.

Channel 4

- 6.00 *Sesame Street* (R) (318022).
- 6.55 *The Magic School Bus* (S) (4114732).
- 7.30 Dennis (R) (7559889).
- 7.45 First Edition (7547041).
- 8.00 *Transworld Sport* (49377).
- 9.00 *The Morning Line* (S) (41848).
- 10.00 *Gazzetta Football Italia* (51138).
- 11.00 *Blitz* (S) (31747).
- 12.00 *Rawhide* (9390428).
- 12.55 *Goodbye My Chips* (Herbert Ross 1969 UK). Peter O'Toole is the best thing about this overblown musical version of James Hilton's bestselling account of his schoolmaster father being humanised by marriage and a lifelong contact with youth. The songs are dreadful. Petula Clark, Michael Redgrave and Stan Phillips support (31716370).
- 3.35 *The Big Break*. Struggling actors are the subject of this repeat *Short Stories* documentary (R) (8284404).
- 4.05 *The Making of an Englishman*. Kevin and Andrew MacDonald on their grandfather, the screenwriter Eric Pressburger (R) (S) (7803206).
- 5.05 *Brookside Omnibus* (R) (S) (4139848).
- 6.30 *Right to Reply* (S) (933).
- 7.00 *News and Weather* (355664).
- 7.05 *The People's Parliament*. Today's motion is "Parents are responsible for their children's behaviour at school and should be fined if they persistently disrupt classes" (S) (233732).
- 8.00 *Voces in the Dark*. Professor Carlo Ginzburg recounts the story of a 16th-century miller who was burnt as a heretic (S) (2867).
- 9.00 *E (R)* (S) (944119).
- 9.55 *Father Ted* (R) (S) (13670).
- 10.25 *DCI Blue* (R) (S) (476410).
- 11.25 *Dyke TV: Dyke Blend*. Compilation of the coffee advert parodies (S) (405480).
- 11.40 *Lesbian Bed Death*. The demise of sex in long-term lesbian relationships (S) (121567).
- 11.55 *Disgraceful Conduct*. Drama about a lesbian officer in the Royal Air Force whose career is threatened when a colleague reports her to the RAF Special Investigation Branch (S) (676652).
- 12.15 *Child of Mine*. Lesbians who have sought legal recognition of their positions as parents (S) (480562).
- 1.00 *Shades of Desire*. Inter-racial lesbian couples (S) (1494936).
- 1.20 *Linger* (R) (S) (8388707).
- 1.35 *Butch/Femme*. How relevant is the notion of butch or femme identities to lesbians today? On this evidence, tediously so (R) (2928184).
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Radio**Choice**

- Kaleidoscope (7.20pm R4) looks back at the 1946 film of *The Big Sleep*, and there are more noir tones in a new series of *Stanza on Stage* (11.30pm R4), opening with Tony Harrison (left) reading work on Bosnia, Hiroshima and such like.
- 12.55 Weather.
- 1.10 Any Questions? Jonathan Dimbleby's guests in Farnborough, Hampshire, are Dr Marjorie and Alan Mr. Shadow. Historian and broadcaster Dr David Starkey, Archy Kirkwood MP, Liberal Democrat Chief Whip, Tony Baldry MP, Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.
- 1.45 Impressions. Brian Morton rounds up the best of the regional news.
- 2.20 *Marinette, les Cendres*: examine the first recordings made by Thelonious Monk under his own name at the age of 30. (1/8).
- 1.00 Through the Night.
- 1.05 *Orchestral Concert*. Sam RSD/Mariont Honeck, Smetana: *Die Barcarolle*; Dvorak: Slavonic Dances Op. 46 Nos. 2, 3, 7 and 8; Op. 72 Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 7; Janácek: Lachian Dances. Kodály: Suite-Hungarian.
- 2.40 *Game Plays Chopin*. 4.00 Music from 16th-Century Italy. Performed by Ensemble Romaneque.
- 5.00 Sequence.
- 5.55 7.00am Open University: Maths: Exam Revision. 6.15 American Conversations: Jean Kirkpatrick. 6.35 Social Sciences: The World and You.
- 8.00 Radio 2.
- 8.30 Youth Orchestras of the World. David McGuinness introduces music from the concerts given by the Chamber Orchestra of the Asturias Music Academy at Tello. Peter Paermann, and the 100-strong Viotti Youth Orchestra of the Netherlands, conductor Wim Bradenhorst. Mozart: Divertimento in F major; Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 1; minor; Thomas Wilson-Touchstone. Budino Om: A Carmen Fantasy for cello and orchestra. Jaan Raats: Concerto for Violin and orchestra. Chamber Orchestra No. 1. Jazz Record Requests.
- 5.45 Music Masters.
- 6.25 Hippolyte et Aricie, Live from the Palais Garnier, Paris. Jean-Philippe Rameau's con-
- 6.00 Radio 4. 6.00am *Music for the Mind* (R4) 6.00am *News Briefing*. 6.10 *Farming Today*. 6.55 *Prayer for the Day*. 6.55 Weather.
- 7.00 *Today*.
- 7.58 Weather.
- 8.00 News.
- 8.05 Sport on 4.
- 9.30 *World Cup*.
- 8.55 Saturday Night Theatre: Victoria Station. By Steve Chambers. With Sean Baker and Philip Jackson. (15).
- 9.35 Classics with Kay. Brian Kay introduces Warlock's Capriccio Suite.
- 12.25 *News Quiz*.
- 6.00am *Short Story*.
- 6.00am *Newsdesk* 5.30 Letter from America 1.45 Britain Today 2.00 *Newsdesk* 2.

literary garbage

Are dross so far removed from everyday life that one working-class bloke looks like another?



david aaronovitch

Whenever I read stories of men who have been crushed by animals falling from tall buildings, or who have been experimenting with some exotic device for achieving solitary pleasure and now need to have it surgically removed, I tend to think "there but for the grace of God go I." Even if I do not use such aids myself, or go near such buildings, I can quite understand the circumstances giving rise to these accidents.

But this week's story about the tragic destruction of much of the valuable library of world-renowned Cambridge don, Sir Frank Kermode, goes beyond easy comprehension. Sir Frank (whose name I first heard on the radio, and thus expected to be spelled Kermode) was moving house, and had packed many of his books and papers into cardboard boxes. That day the removals men were to pick them up. At the same time the unwanted detritus of many years had to be shifted, and the council's dust collectors were also due to make a "special collection" to take the rubbish to the dump.

Unfortunately (and amazingly) the dustmen called first, and were directed to the boxes of books by the septuagenarian professor, who asked to bear them off. I have been unable to discover whether the rubbish was subsequently carefully re-installed in the new house by the removals company; but in any case, by the time the error was detected many of the books had been physically compressed in one of those great lumbering manglers.

There are several extraordinary features to this tale which make it difficult to credit. Many will find it hard to believe that the dustmen called at all. There are areas of Britain where it is necessary for one of the inhabitants to hide behind the garden hedge on collection day, and jump out in front of the refuse lorry, so that it has no option but to stop. At this point his or her neighbours emerge and - before they can be prevented - throw their rubbish bags in the back. And even then there is no guarantee that they won't be thrown

out again. They must view Cambridge à la Kermode with envy. I worry lest they decide to travel to Sir Frank's house, and leave all their refuse outside.

But even allowing for the fact that Cambridge may be better served than some cities, it would seem odd that the cultured knight should not notice that he was dealing with dustmen rather than moving men. As David Hopkins, the council officer responsible, rather acidly commented, "We have large white and green dustcarts with a huge hole in the end where the men stick the rubbish. Usually when people see a refuse truck and a couple of dirty blokes, there isn't a problem."

This would seem, therefore,

to place the blame squarely on Sir Frank himself. Does he therefore belong to a class of person so removed from the grubby encounters of everyday life, that one working-class sort of bloke looks pretty much like another? The sort of chap, in fact, who would be likely to stop Gary Lineker in a restaurant and ask for a gin and tonic? Or who will happily accept the right of a burglar to wander around his home stealing things, providing the thief looks confident and has a card inside a clear plastic holder?

This is, I think, unfair.

Closely textual analysis of the Kermode saga reveals that the dustmen involved were rather nastily dressed in "blue shirts and orange trousers". In other words, they did not look like the refuse collectors of old, but squeaky clean, new, skilled garbage operatives. For this is increasingly an era of image creation for all. We are becoming used to slogans such as Welcome to Camden; Huddersfield's working for you; Council Services, Your Services; and so on. It's a ten to one bet that many image-conscious garbage operatives are doused with a pleasant (if inexpensive) can deodorant by their supervisors between collections. So now not even the smell is likely to give them away. Or, as Lone Donegan didn't once sing, "My old man's a dustman, 'e wears a bowler hat".

The battle between Barbara Castle, 85, and Harriet Harman, 46, over the future of pensions is a curious event - a mighty clash of swords between the moderniser of yesterday and the moderniser of today. Whoever wins, the blood of a good woman will be spilt on the floor at Blackpool next week.

For her finest hour, Mrs Castle was the woman who very nearly succeeded in shaping the old union-bound Labour party into a modern social democratic force. How extraordinary to find her now shoulder to shoulder with one of those who destroyed her - Jack Jones, pensioners' champion, but formerly one of the granite-hard, trade union rocks upon which her ship founded.

"Who exactly is Barbara Castle?" asked a timid young colleague, making some of us feel old. I first remember her when I was eight or nine at a May day rally in Battersea Park. There she stood on the back of an open lorry, flaming hair blowing in the spring air, flaming oratory billowing out into the wind. She wore a diaphanous red scarf and she looked like a Soviet poster. I fell in love with her as did so many others.

But those were not her finest hours, those days as a socialist heroine and keeper of the eternal Bevan flame. They may have been her most enjoyable hours, for playing La Passionaria - even in the moderate climes of British politics - is far more fun than the hard grind of real politics. (Fun in lots of ways - for her publisher charmingly regaled a party a couple of weeks ago with a story of Aneurin Bevan making a "passionate" pass at her once upon a time.) No, her finest hour was in 1969, the year of her defeat which led to Labour's defeat, the year she performed her great act of bravery.

As Secretary for Employment and Productivity, her socialism lead her to a firm belief in a prices and incomes policy. But the explosion of unofficial strikes beyond the control of the unions threatened not only a fair distribution of wealth, but also the public's sense of good order and justice in those far-off days with virtually no trade control.

For my young colleague, this is a flavour of the times: a wild cat walk-out at the Girling brake factory was the last straw for Castle. It was the 57th there in 18 months and led to the lay-off of 5,000 other car workers in an inter-union dispute over an oil valve. Undaunted by the Siamese symbiosis between Labour and unions, known sardonically as Tigmoo (This Great Movement of Ours), she set out to change the law in a White

Paper, "In Place of Strife".

Castle proposed legal sanctions: no strikes without a 28-day cooling-off period and compulsory strike ballots - no more factory gate show-of-hands decisions. Suddenly, the socialist darling became the demon. Ms Harman knows the feeling. The left and the unions - Jack Jones, in particular, leader of the mighty TGWU - rose up against her. Jim Callaghan, embittered Home Secretary greedy for Wilson's job, rated and by June, despite strong public enthusiasm for it, the policy fell - to be replaced with a much-mocked commitment by the unions to "Solemn and Binding" agreements with no legal force. The next year, perhaps partly as a result, Labour lost the election.

So what has become of Mrs Castle's brave modernising instincts now? Is it the call of the wild, personified by Jack Jones, that summons her back to her more romantic youth? I see the old fire in her eye. As the pensioners' Passionaria, she will ride into battle at the conference and stir the cockles of many an old heart. Raise pensions for all! Return to the (very short) time when they were linked to earnings not to profits!

She is right, the real value of the state pension is falling fast. But the demise of the National Insurance system is as necessary now to Labour and Ms Harman, as reform of trade union law was to Mrs Castle's party. It is one of the last great sacred cows lying across the tracks (so sacred, in fact, that Peter Lilley still pays vigorous verbal obeisance to the principle). Labour's commitment to increase universal benefits -

child benefit and pensions - in its last manifesto helped cost it the election. It attracted few votes and was so expensive it scuppered any more imaginative spending plans.

Ms Harman is no Barbara Castle. A delicate, middle-class English rose, not a firebrand, she is a product of a more modern party where women can be ordinary mothers, not role-model revolutionaries. But she has been torched by the old guard of the party just as Castle was before her, for her decision to send her son to a grammar school. Castle, being childless, never knew the agonising personal dilemma of the London Labour politician deciding where to educate their children. Many in the Labour Party of the Sixties and Seventies now feel some guilt for sacrificing their children's

Barbara Castle was brought down by the old party warriors of her day. She should remember that when she tries to defeat Harriet Harman's pension plans

A wasted chance for peace, if not love



Patently constructed hopes for a positive change in Arab-Israeli relations lie in ruins.

Israel's belligerent new leaders are to blame, says David Grossman

How hard it is to create something new in this world, and how easy it is to destroy it. It took only a few hours to demolish the delicate web of relations that had been woven between Palestinians and Israelis after 100 years of animosity. Of what was that web made? Of the most abstract things: much good will on both sides, war fatigue and, especially, the maturity and readiness of some great leaders who in the wisdom of age were able to rise above their fears, and rebel against their own mentalities.

During the past two years we were able to begin to speculate on how real peace between Israel and its neighbours might look. Peace, I emphasise, not love. But then who looks for love between nations? The main thing is the change in categories of feeling and thinking: it suddenly became clear, to the surprise of many Palestinians and Israelis, that if you cast aside your stereotypes and see the enemy as a human being, you discover that he is a person like yourself. It turned out that a person - and a nation - could decide it was no longer prepared to continue to be the victim of a stagnant view of the world, of a narrow interpretation of its own history. Maybe that sounds banal, but the events of this week show to what extent all of us in this region are the slaves of our stereotypes and how little use of force is our tongue.

The opportunity for peace revealed to us that you do not have to live every part of your life in the dichotomous framework of "victim or master". The three years since the signing of the Oslo agreement instilled in Israelis and Palestinians the feeling of freedom, of the beginning of a long recovery. Here and there new ties were made - economic, cultural, even military. A routine of working together began, and mechanisms were created that succeeded with great discernment, through a process of mutual education, in liquidating the foot of opposition to peace. New personal friendships were established. Let me give one small example: when more than 50 Israelis were murdered last February in suicide attacks by Hamas extremists, a Palestinian friend called me from Ramallah and offered to donate blood to the wounded.

The process has been difficult and bitter and bloody. Most Israelis and most Palestinians are still a long way from the lofty, hopeful feeling I described. In fact, the concessions that Oslo forced both sides to make led to more anxiety for many, and to a sense that the other side was tricking them. These people were pushed one more, decisive step towards the brink.

The Oslo agreement of 1993 reflects this ambivalence. Only at first glance was it a "peace of the brave", as Arafat termed it. Anyone who read the agreements and examined the maps

understood that the bravery had been enough only to break down the psychological barriers, but not to create a deep and fundamental change in relations between the two peoples. The agreement - which provided for leaving Israeli settlements where they were and which hacked the West Bank into a checkerboard of detours and roadblocks and areas of Israeli control - didn't have much of a chance from the start.

I want to believe that a rational and flexible government - like the Rabin-Peres administration in its later stages - would have been smart enough to repair the flaws in the agreement while continuing the process, in the hope that the majority of Israelis would, slowly, recognise the great blessing that real peace could bring. The greatness of Rabin and Peres was that at a certain point (not at the beginning of the process) they defined for themselves the final goal - true peace - and decided to ignore all the obstacles along the way to it, including dismantling violations by the Palestinians, and the temptations of the use of force, Israel's traditional way of communicating with the Arabs.

Netanyahu has a different final goal, one that is becoming nauseatingly clear as time goes on. Of course he wants peace. Who doesn't want peace? But everything he does indicates that he wants some sort of abstract peace, one without

concessions, one without a partner. His virtual fantasy peace led in this week straight into a

But the peace process created another new, decisive fact: Israel is today a part of the Middle East. After decades of conflict, several important Arab states came to understand that they had to accept Israel's presence. This was a huge achievement for Israel, one that makes real a dream that its leaders had always evoked. That dream carries a price tag - it requires that we grow up and start to act more responsibly. Israeli governments can no longer do whatever they like in the region and solve every problem by force of arms alone.

As long as Israel was entirely isolated here it allowed itself, sometimes with great justice, to treat all those around it as absolute enemies and to strike back with great force against any provocation. Today, Israel's ties with Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinians restrict and complicate its responses. Today Israel has a lot to lose in the Middle East. Worsening relations with Egypt and Jordan. The reverse is also true - progress in one channel will strengthen others.

Under Netanyahu's leadership, Israel is being dragged again and again into impulsive and irresponsible actions. It is humiliating the Palestinians and

treating them with contempt. Netanyahu played games of prestige for weeks before finally deigning to meet with the head of the Palestinian Authority, as if only the Palestinians had an interest in such a meeting. One hundred days after the elections, Netanyahu is still refusing to honour Israel's signature on the Oslo agreement and to redeploy Israeli forces in Hebron, and government ministers are building more and more houses in the settlements and creating a situation that, perhaps, only a horrible war will be able to solve.

Netanyahu today represents all that is arrogant and beligerent in Israeli politics - those very traits we had just begun to recover from. This latest deterioration in the situation will, of course, lead his supporters to declare: "We told you - you can never trust the Arabs. We gave them guns and they're using them to kill us. Between us the sword will always rule."

I, and those who think like me, also see in these events support for our opinions, but there is one decisive difference: we have already tried the way of conflict and battle, and we have discovered that violence leads to ruin. But the road to peace ... that road we have but barely trodden. And today it looks longer and farther away than ever.

David Grossman is an Israeli novelist. His latest work is *The Book of Intimate Grammar*.

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FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES									
STERLING					D-MARK				
Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-MARK
US	15557	7.5	2.8	15559	2.1	2.4	8560	8560	8560
Canada	22225	1.1	5.0	15558	2.2	5.5	10000	10000	10000
Australia	15554	1.1	5.2	15552	2.2	5.2	10000	10000	10000
France	20555	1.5-24	5.2-57	15557	7.5	23-24	3250	3250	3250
Italy	22555	4.5-53	12.5-57	15558	44-51	23-25	5500	5500	5500
Japan	15528	7.5-29	15529	4.4-44	7.4	22.5	5250	5250	5250
ECU	15559	5.1-11	5.5	15553	7.4	22.5	5250	5250	5250
Denmark	15557	1.4	3.5	15550	2.5-25	15555	15555	15555	15555
Netherlands	15525	6.5-57	15526	2.5-25	15527	4.1	15528	15528	15528
Ireland	15525	7.5	25-15	15525	4.1	15526	15526	15526	15526
Norway	15551	20-50	55-50	15551	40-50	55-50	15551	15551	15551
Spain	15551	7.5-15	15552	3.2-22	15551	40-51	15550	15550	15550
Sweden	15551	7.5	15552	3.2-24	15551	35-57	15551	15551	15551
Switzerland	15545	54-55	15552	15553	15551	55-55	15551	15551	15551
Australia*	15550	20-35	55-55	15550	15551	55-55	15551	15551	15551
Hong Kong	15526	10-15	15527	2.5-25	15526	55-55	15526	15526	15526
Malaysia	15526	10-15	15527	2.5-25	15526	55-55	15526	15526	15526
Saudi Arabia	15540	0.0	0.0	15553	2.7	5.1-14	24500	24500	24500
Singapore	15520	0.0	0.0	15551	4.30	15551	15551	15551	15551

Note: Forward rates quoted high to low are at a discount (backward rates quoted low to high are at a premium) to spot rate. *Forward rates are not available. For exchange rates see page 122. Cash rates apply to sterling (cheap) 40 other currencies.

INTERNATIONAL EQUITY & BOND									
MANAGED BONDS									
Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	Country	Spot
US	15557	7.5	2.8	15559	2.1	2.4	8560	Canada	15552
Canada	22225	1.1	5.0	15558	2.2	5.5	10000	Austria	15552
UK	15554	1.1	5.2	15552	2.2	5.2	10000	Denmark	15552
France	20555	1.5-24	5.2-57	15557	7.5	23-24	3250	Portugal	15550
Italy	22555	4.5-53	12.5-57	15558	44-51	23-25	5500	Spain	15550
Japan	15528	7.5-29	15529	4.4-44	7.4	22.5	5250	Sweden	15551
ECU	15559	5.1-11	5.5	15553	7.4	22.5	5250	Switzerland	15551
Denmark	15557	1.4	3.5	15550	2.5-25	15555	15555	Australia	15551
Netherlands	15525	6.5-57	15526	2.5-25	15527	4.1	15528	Hong Kong	15551
Ireland	15525	7.5	25-15	15525	4.1	15526	15526	Malaysia	15551
Spain	15551	20-50	55-50	15551	40-50	55-50	15551	Saudi Arabia	15551
Sweden	15551	7.5	15552	3.2-24	15551	35-57	15551	Singapore	15551
Switzerland	15545	54-55	15552	15553	15551	55-55	15551	United States	15551
Australia*	15550	20-35	55-55	15550	15551	55-55	15551	UAE	15546
Hong Kong	15526	10-15	15527	2.5-25	15526	55-55	15526	United States	15551
Malaysia	15526	10-15	15527	2.5-25	15526	55-55	15526	United States	15551
Saudi Arabia	15540	0.0	0.0	15553	2.7	5.1-14	24500	United States	15551
Singapore	15520	0.0	0.0	15551	4.30	15551	15551	United States	15551

TURIST RATES										
Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	
Argentina	15555	0.0057	2.0000	2.0000	15552	0.0052	2.0000	2.0000	Algeria	15552
Austria	15557	0.0224	15552	15552	0.0221	15552	15552	15552	Angola	15552
Belgium	15552	0.0225	15552	15552	0.0220	15552	15552	15552	Bulgaria	15552
China	15559	0.0307	15552	15552	0.0305	15552	15552	15552	Cambodia	15552
Egypt	15552	0.0247	15552	15552	0.0245	15552	15552	15552	Cameroon	15552
Finland	15542	0.0216	15552	15552	0.0215	15552	15552	15552	Central African Rep.	15552
Greece	15545	0.0215	15552	15552	0.0214	15552	15552	15552	Chad	15552
Iceland	15550	0.0225	15552	15552	0.0224	15552	15552	15552	Chile	15552
Ireland	15551	0.0226	15552	15552	0.0225	15552	15552	15552	China	15552
Italy	15552	0.0227	15552	15552	0.0226	15552	15552	15552	Colombia	15552
Japan	15528	0.0228	15552	15552	0.0227	15552	15552	15552	Costa Rica	15552
Malta	15553	0.0229	15552	15552	0.0228	15552	15552	15552	Croatia	15552
Netherlands	15525	0.0230	15552	15552	0.0229	15552	15552	15552	Cuba	15552
Norway	15551	0.0231	15552	15552	0.0230	15552	15552	15552	Cyprus	15552
Spain	15551	0.0232	15552	15552	0.0231	15552	15552	15552	Czech Republic	15552
Sweden	15551	0.0233	15552	15552	0.0232	15552	15552	15552	Denmark	15552
Switzerland	15545	0.0234	15552	15552	0.0233	15552	15552	15552	Djibouti	15552
Australia*	15550	0.0235	15552	15552	0.0234	15552	15552	15552	Ecuador	15552
Hong Kong	15526	0.0236	15552	15552	0.0235	15552	15552	15552	Egypt	15552
Malaysia	15526	0.0237	15552	15552	0.0236	15552	15552	15552	El Salvador	15552
Saudi Arabia	15540	0.0238	15552	15552	0.0237	15552	15552	15552	Equatorial Guinea	15552
Singapore	15520	0.0239	15552	15552	0.0238	15552	15552	15552	Eritrea	15552
United States	15551	0.0240	15552	15552	0.0239	15552	15552	15552	Eswatini	15552
United Kingdom	15552	0.0241	15552	15552	0.0240	15552	15552	15552	Egypt	15552
United States	15551	0.0242	15552	15552	0.0241	15552	15552	15552	Egypt	15552
United States	15551	0.0243	15552	15552	0.0242	15552	15552	15552	Egypt	15552
United States	15551	0.0244	15552	15552	0.0243	15552	15552	15552	Egypt	15552
United States	15551	0.0245	15552	15552	0.0244	15552	15552	15552	Egypt	15552
United States	15551	0.0246	15552	15552	0.0245	15552				

business

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BUSINESS NEWS DESK: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098

Matthew Clark chief gets reprieve

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

Peter Aikens and his embattled management team at cider maker Matthew Clark have been given a stay of execution to solve the problems that forced the company to issue a damaging profits warning earlier this month.

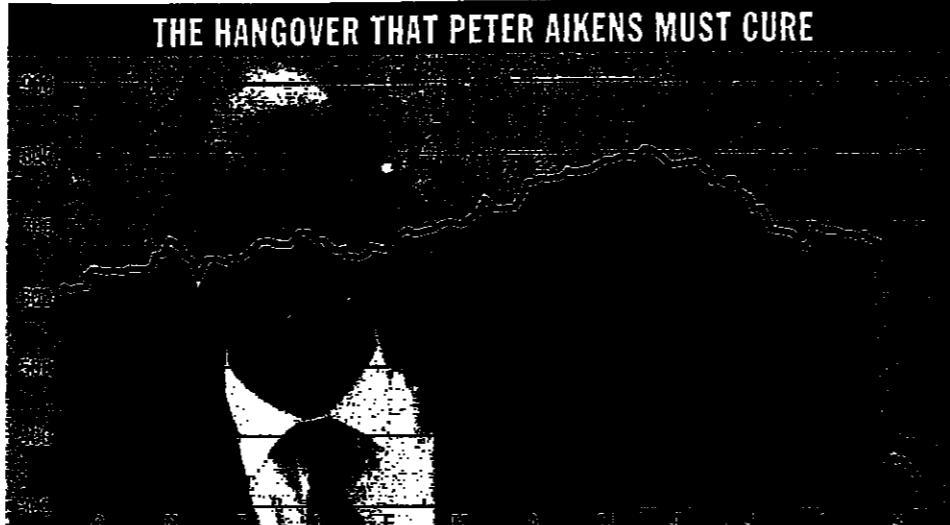
It is understood they have been given until the end of the year to come up with a credible strategy to take on the increasingly popular alcopops that have devastated demand for Clark's Diamond White and K cider brands.

Mr Aikens has just completed a two-week programme of briefings with Clark's largest shareholders in an attempt to reassure them that the wider speculations about the future of the company were wide of the mark. He encountered some resistance from shareholders who were left fuming by a collapse in the company's share price fol-

lowing the profit warning, but it is thought most large shareholders have taken the view that the current team is best placed to solve the problems.

After a week in London, Matthew Clark took its roadshow up to Scotland this week where its presentation is thought to have gone down badly. One analyst said: "The trouble is Peter Aikens hasn't got a strategy in place. All they've been able to do tell investors what went wrong, not what they plan to do about it."

Shares in Matthew Clark have been in freefall since 10 September when the acquisitive company warned that its profits had suffered severely from the rapid rise in popularity of alcoholic lemonade drinks such as Bass's Hoopers Hooch and Merrydown's Two Dogs. Analysts slashed their profit forecasts for the year to next April from about £70m to £50m and the shares tumbled 35 per cent on the day to 435p.



THE HANGOVER THAT PETER AIKENS MUST CURE

The shares have continued to fall and yesterday, after a volatile trading session, closed at 318.5p where they have lost more than half their value since reaching a high of 801p as re-

cently as May. At current levels the market appears to be holding back until more information becomes available. According to one analyst: "If nothing suspect is going on, the

shares have been oversold. But the market is not convinced and that uncertainty means the shares could fall another £2 or bounce £2."

It also emerged yesterday

that Clark is about to appoint a marketing consultancy to help devise a promotional strategy to replace the price-led marketing that analysts believe has left the company open to attack from competitors. Unlike many of its peers, Clark has avoided expensive brand-building advertising on television in favour of price discounts.

Attention focused on the importance of building brands this week when Guinness admitted that it had been wrong to focus on price rather than brand promotion. It promised a big increase in marketing spending to rebuild brand awareness.

Matthew Clark's strategic rethink is understood to be focusing on three main areas: a look at the existing brand range to decide which drinks should be most heavily promoted; a study of possible new products; and an analysis of whether recent changes in drinking patterns of young consumers are

part of a permanent shift or merely a passing fad.

The industry has been caught on the hop by the rapid emergence of a new class of alcoholic drink. It is estimated that alcopops are selling more than 100 million litres a year from a standing start only a year ago. Market researchers say the market is worth £250m a year.

When Hoopers Hooch and Two Dogs, an Australian drink, were launched last year, few analysts took them seriously. Sales were expected to drop as a matter of course but instead other drinks companies jumped on the bandwagon and the sector's momentum merely accelerated.

HP Bulmer, a rival to Matthew Clark in the cider market, has launched flavoured ciders to attack alcopops head on and Guinness has been quick to launch ready-mixed drinks such as Gingin' gin and fizzy herbal water, and Bell's with Coke, lemonade and even Irn Bru.

Olivetti peace plan for London investors

PATRICK TOOHER

Olivetti, the beleaguered Italian electronics group, has held out an olive branch to London-based institutional investors by offering them a seat on the board.

The move is being seen as an attempt to resolve a crisis that has threatened to push Olivetti to the brink of collapse.

Rudolfo de Benedetti, son of former Olivetti chairman Carlo, made the offer earlier this week on behalf of his family at a meeting in Italy with Mark Pignatelli, a director with ING Barings Asset Management.

Mr Pignatelli talked with other investors representing about a quarter of Olivetti's shares before telling the company the shareholders thought the offer was a good idea.

The name of Dario Trevisan, a Milanese lawyer and shareholder rights activist, has been put forward to speak for the City institutions. He is often asked to represent and vote for foreign investors at Italian shareholders' meetings.

Olivetti was plunged into crisis last month when it reported a greater than expected 440 billion lire (£293m) loss and Carlo de Benedetti resigned as chairman.

The first-half accounts were publicly questioned by Renzo Francesconi, a former Olivetti director, prompting investigations by public prosecutors and stock market regulators which last week led to the resignation of Olivetti's chief executive, Francesco Caio.

Prosecutors yesterday began questioning Mr Caio regarding the group's first-half results. Mr Caio's lawyer, Ennio Festa, said his client was "appearing at his own initiative to provide explanations concerning the accusations of falsified accounting made against him".

"The half-year balance sheet is less important than the one for the full year," Mr Festa said. "It is made up of estimates and provisions." Olivetti's final first-half results are expected to be released on Monday.

In a separate development, French industrial holding group CGIP yesterday confirmed it was in talks to buy Carlo de Benedetti's \$1bn stake in French car parts maker Valeo.

Mr de Benedetti controls Valeo through a complicated series of shareholdings. He controls 56 per cent of Cofide, which has 50.1 per cent of CIR, which in turn owns 49 per cent of Valeo. Valeo is 27 per cent owned by Cerus.

Selling the Valeo stake would raise enough money to pay down most of the debt amassed in Mr de Benedetti's holding companies.

CGIP's announcement sent shares in CIR soaring on the Milan stock exchange. They had fallen to an all-time low after Mr de Benedetti took majority control of CIR last week when he increased his stake from 48.5 per cent. Since then the shares have risen by almost a quarter.

Consob, the Italian stock market regulator, is looking into whether Mr de Benedetti's share purchase constitutes insider trading in the light of the announcement yesterday from CGIP. Analysts in Milan claim investors who sold shares in CIR last week did not have the same information about Valeo as Mr de Benedetti had when he raised his holding in CIR.

On the Milan stock exchange, shares in Olivetti bucked a firm market trend to close 2.4 per cent lower at 525 lire as investors focused on the questioning of Mr Caio over the allegations about misleading interim results.

IMF in Washington: Europe's policy mix tops the agenda at G7 meeting as Wolfensohn promises to turn World Bank around

US to push for lower interest rates in Europe

DIANE COYLE
Washington

Tensions over interest rates are likely to cast a cloud over today's meeting in Washington of finance ministers from the Group of Seven (G7) industrial countries. The US administration is expected to press for lower European interest rates in order to boost growth.

Robert Rubin, US Treasury secretary, said the question of the right mix of monetary and fiscal policy in Europe would be on the agenda at the meeting. "We are very interested in the European policy mix. It is very important to the US that Europe grows," he said.

The Americans share the concern that efforts by governments on the Continent to cut their budget deficits in the run-up to the single currency run the risk of slowing the economic recovery too much. Although the German economy has displayed some signs of revival, growth in France remains weak.

The US lobbying for a further cut in French and German interest rates is likely to get support from Britain. A senior official said: "It is a very good question. Why not ease the interest rate? It will be interesting to hear the German answer."

The International Monetary Fund also favours a reduction in the cost of borrowing on the Continent. Its World Economic Outlook, published this week, said the process of rate reductions in Germany had not come to an end.

The IMF predicts much slower growth in the EU than in the

US this year, and although it predicts a pick-up in Europe next year, that is due mainly to robust growth in the UK. It puts growth in Germany and France at 1.3 per cent this year and 2.4 per cent next year, based on the assumption that rates fall further, compared to 2.4 per cent then 2.3 per cent in the US.

If Germany does not ease monetary policy it will face an awkward choice. Either the link between pre-EMU budget cuts and slow growth will become increasingly obvious, or there will be less success in trimming government deficits in which case the figures will have to be fudged for the single currency to go ahead on time.

The Germans are expected to warn of the need for higher interest rates in the Anglo-Saxon economies – a view again supported by the IMF. "There will be an interesting discussion about the stance of US policy," one European official remarked dryly. Michael Mussa, the

Alan Greenspan, Fed Chairman, called in the FBI to trace the leak.

The G7 meeting is also due to discuss the poor country debt initiative and opening up trade to developing countries. The UK is supporting proposals by Renato Ruggiero, head of the new World Trade Organisation, to open world markets further to developing countries.

The non-US countries are also sure to attack the Americans again over the controversial Helms-Burton legislation, which applies sanctions to companies from other countries which do business with Cuba. The law has been bitterly criticised outside the US and has provoked the most serious trade row between industrial countries for many years.

James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank, promised yesterday that his programme for reforming the giant institution would be showing dramatic results before next year's annual meeting, writes Diane Coyle.

Speaking at the end of his first year in the job, he said: "In 12 months from now you will see a vastly different World Bank. We are trying damn hard to turn around a 50-year-old culture."

The Bank will in future concentrate on its results in terms of social and economic indicators as well as financial perfor-

mance, he said. In other words, it will measure its achievements by how far it reduces poverty rather than how much it lends – something that critics of the world's biggest development organisation have long advocated.

"That, to me, is a revolution," said Mr Wolfensohn. Oxfam this week issued a report card giving him a B grade for his first year's efforts – something he took as an endorsement from the charity. Oxfam was unrealistic about the speed with which the 10,000-strong bank could be altered, he said.

There are 1.2 billion people in the world with no access to an adequate water supply, 2 billion with no power and 2 billion who have never made a telephone call.

The World Bank is part-way through a comprehensive poverty assessment of all its borrower countries. It is particularly concerned to go behind the per capita economic statistics to look at income distribution. Basic infrastructure, health and education were its top priorities, with a new emphasis on projects benefiting as many people as possible.

There are 1.2 billion people

in the world with no access to an adequate water supply, 2 billion with no power and 2 billion who have never made a telephone call. Mr Wolfensohn said there would also be a new focus on rural development as three-quarters of the world's poor live in rural areas. He has already made significant progress on making the Bank less bureaucratic and giving its officials more individual responsibility and authority. Lending projects need to go through two stages rather than five to get approval. In some areas of the Bank, staff have had to reapply for their jobs, while 250 people have been sent on management training courses.

World Bank's cultural revolution

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Olivetti
Peace
plan for
London
investors



MICHAEL HARRISON

For the past 17 years, competition and privatisation have been the defining themes of the Government's industrial policy. Now, as it approaches the fag end of this Parliament, it is left with three stinkers on its hands'

Healthy competition is giving Lang a headache

Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, will very shortly find himself juggling with three potatoes of the middling to hot variety. Yesterday he received the Monopolies and Mergers Commission report into the competing bids for South West Water. The Office of Fair Trading is due any day to submit its recommendation on whether Stagecoach's takeover of the train leasing company Porterbrook should be referred to the MMC. And Mr Lang is about to receive a similar note advising him what to do about the British Airways-American Airlines alliance. In each case, the decision Mr Lang reaches will have important consequences for competition. In each case, privatised companies are centre-stage.

What could be more appropriate? For the past 17 years, competition and privatisation have been the defining themes of the Government's industrial policy. Now, as it approaches the fag end of this Parliament, it is left with three stinkers on its hands. What is more important? Remaining true to its instincts that healthy competition is the best guarantee of vibrant markets? Or remaining loyal to the companies that pri-

vatised?

By and large, successive secretaries of state have opted for the former. There was a temporary hiatus when Michael Heseltine was in charge at the Department of Trade and Industry. He rolled back the tide of both competition and privatisation by supporting a national champions policy and failing to

get the Royal Mail sold off. With Mr Lang's arrival, however, DTI strategy has reverted to the norm as championed by the likes of Norman Tebbit and Peter Lilley. In John Bridgeman, the Director General of Fair Trading, Mr Lang has a like-minded ally.

They will need to be strong and certain in their convictions because the protagonists in each of these three mergers have presented a powerful argument for why they should be allowed to go about their business unfettered.

The argument goes something like this. If you stop us from proceeding, UK plc will be the loser. Foreigners will come and take over our industries or take away our market share. If you allow us to proceed but impose conditions on us that are unacceptable, we will walk away and the consumer will be the loser.

Now there can be little dispute that privatisation has produced substantial benefits. Freed from the constraints of Whitehall control, these former state-owned businesses have become vastly more efficient, versatile and profitable. There is an argument to be had, however, over the way the spoils have been divided up between shareholders and customers.

The electricity industry, for instance, has already returned more capital to investors than it was privatised with and the water industry is heading the same way. BA and Stagecoach and Severn Trent and Wessex, the two suitors for South West Water, would have us believe that if they are

allowed to proceed there will be more efficiency gains and more benefits as a result for consumers.

In reality these deals are about building ever bigger and more dominant empires first, enhancing shareholder value second and improving the lot of the consumer third.

For that reason the concessions extracted in return for allowing them to go ahead must be significant. In the case of BA and American, the minimum concession must be the surrender of sufficient slots and associated airport facilities at Heathrow to make increased competition a reality, not just a promise.

In the case of Severn Trent and Wessex, the water regulator, Ian Byatt, can realistically demand price cuts of at least 20 per cent for customers of South West Water alongside lower bills for customers of the two bidding companies as a condition for approval.

It is more difficult to see what undertakings Stagecoach can give to mitigate the effects of allowing it to vertically integrate its passenger rail franchises with a company that supplies the rolling stock. The scope for sweetheart deals is obvious. More seriously, if Stagecoach is allowed to proceed, what is there to prevent the other two leasing companies from teaming up with train operators? In that event, smaller rail operators would be forced to lease their rolling stock from competitors, and powerful ones at that.

Mr Lang could probably do without these headaches with the party conference just a

week away. But he should not be distracted by the political noise. They could be three of the last decisions he makes as Secretary of State. For that reason alone, he should get them right.

Will Clarke be bold enough to be boring?

Speaking of political survival invariably brings the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, to mind. Earlier this week he enraged the Eurosceptic wing of the Tory party with a piece of provocation that was as wanton as it was bold. The Eurosceptics believe the Government's only hope of avoiding nemesis at the polls is to reject economic and monetary union decisively and rule out British membership of a single currency in the life-time of the next Parliament.

Mr Clarke, in Dublin for the EU finance ministers meeting, suggested, on the contrary, that it would be "pathetic" for Britain to delay entering EMU. The outrage from the John Redwood camp and the Eurosceptic press was fearful to behold. Demands for his resignation flew thick and fast.

Now the Chancellor is at it again, dropping as heavy a hint as you like that backbenchers should not expect him to deliver a tax-cutting budget to save their skins come polling day. In an interview with London's *Evening Standard*, the Chancellor says: "Tax cuts can only happen if they are in the inter-

ests of the economy. In the past there have been criticisms made of tax cuts which have taken place in the face of rising consumer spending. That is something else for the 'tax cut at any cost' brigade to think about."

Now juxtapose that comment with the latest statistical evidence from the high street. Retail sales are bounding ahead at an annual rate of more than 4 per cent, the housing market looks as if it has made the decisive break back into positive territory and inflationary pressures remain remarkably subdued. It is not unknown for Chancellors to keep the market and the voters guessing in the run-up to a Budget. But if Mr Clarke is as bold as his word then the last Budget before the election will indeed be the prudent, boring, steady-as-she-goes affair that so many pundits want and expect.

In some quarters Mr Clarke is being urged to go for a 4p cut in basic rate tax - 2p now and 2p after the Tories win the election, thus fulfilling the Government's pledge to get down to a basic rate of 20p in the pound.

Mr Clarke's comments on the eve of his arrival at the IMF meeting in Washington, would appear to rule that out firmly enough. It could, of course, be that his remarks have been taken out of context and should not therefore be read into too deeply.

I would not bet on it. The Chancellor looks intent on leaving a sound fiscal and monetary strategy in place for whoever occupies 11 Downing Street after the next election.

Zeneca's asthma drug cleared in US

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Shares in the big drugs groups soared yesterday on a raft of good news for the industry and strong demand from US investors. Zeneca revealed that its Accolate respiratory drug, said to be the first new asthma treatment for 20 years, had now been cleared by the Food and Drug Administration for use in the US market after an earlier hitch.

Glaxo Wellcome, meantime, hit a new all-time high after its best-selling Zantac ulcer treatment was approved in low-dosage form for sale over the counter in six Continental countries.

Sentiment was further boosted by news that drug sales in the world's top 10 markets had grown by 6 per cent to \$70.7bn in the first half of 1996.

US buying on Thursday night spilled over into the London market yesterday. Zeneca was 33p higher at £1.50, helping to reverse some of the previous day's fall, when Bayer of Germany said

it would not bid for the British group. Glaxo Wellcome leapt to within an ace of £1.00, ending 18p up at 994p and SmithKline Beecham put on 16.5p to 771p, after its US pension fund revealed an increased holding.

The FDA approval came as a relief to Zeneca, which suffered a set-back in March when Accolate was rejected by a key advisory committee of the powerful US licensing agency, citing a possible adverse reaction when used with two other drugs.

However, a Zeneca representative in the US said a clinical study of its effects when taken with the allergy drug Seldane was already under way and found no significant problems.

Another study, with the blood-thinning drug Coumadin, was conducted after the panel meeting and found a potential effect on bleeding. As a result, doctors and patients will be warned about mixing the two drugs on the Accolate label, the Zeneca spokeswoman said.

Accolate is the first oral drug for asthma, providing long-term prevention rather than acute treatment, of mild to moderate asthma in children and adults from 12 years old upwards. It is also Zeneca's first drug in this field. Dr Alan Boyd, head of medical research at the group, said it worked by blocking leukotrienes, which stimulate the symptoms of asthma after being triggered by certain stimuli as yet unknown to scientists. As a tablet, Zeneca believes that Accolate represents an advance on existing steroid treatments, given the stigma and difficulties associated with the inhaler devices.

Dr Boyd rejected suggestions from some analysts that Accolate is no more effective than Intal, a long-standing treatment for asthma now off-patent. The US market for the new drug is estimated at around \$1.6bn, but one City estimate suggests that sales are only likely to reach £50m by 1998.



Earl invests in Punters

Richard Capper, chairman, said Mr Earl would not play a part in the day-to-day running of the company but was welcomed as a shareholder. "We're very happy to have him along."

Mr Earl received a significant windfall last month when Whitbread acquired the Pelican

group, which owns the Cafe Rouge chain, for £133m. Mr Earl controlled a major stake in the company.

Mr Capper's vehicle, Lomand Investment Holdings, took control of Courtyard in June when it acquired a 29.9 per cent stake. Lomand oper-

IN BRIEF

• Britain's main banks lent £2.75bn gross to mortgage borrowers in August, up 6 per cent on July, according to the British Bankers' Association. But the BBA said the figures, which are seasonally unadjusted, are further obscured by the inclusion of loans by National & Provincial Building Society, recently taken over by Abbey National. In August 1995, Cheltenham & Gloucester joined the series, also confusing matters. However, including building societies, overall seasonally adjusted lending figures for August are similar to figures for May, the BBA said.

• The US economy grew at a slightly slower pace in the second quarter when the Commerce Department said the rate of growth was 4.7 per cent. This is the second and final revision to the second-quarter data. The first estimate of third-quarter GDP will be released on 30 October. Inflation ran at a 1.8 per cent rate in the second quarter, unchanged from the previous estimate.

• Standard Chartered is merging its investment banking operation into its corporate banking activities which means Gary Southern, head of investment banking, will leave the banking group before year end. The bank is also combining its corporate and institutional banking activities into a group to be headed by David Moir, an executive director. Dave Loreta, chief executive of institutional banking and Merryn Davies, head of corporate banking, will both report to Mr Moir.

• Twenty former and present members of the Goodall Walker Action Group, which fought for compensation from Lloyd's on behalf of loss-making names, are to share a £600,000 "success fee" for their efforts. The exact amount to be paid out will be determined by an independent compensation committee. Among those sharing in the success fee is Michael Deeney, chairman of the action group, although no decision has yet been made on how much he will receive.

• Anagen, the fledgling healthcare group, said it has been unable to raise sufficient further capital to continue the search for a marketing partner for its AuraFlex system. It is now actively seeking a buyer for all or part of the Anagen (UK) business. The suspension of trading in its shares would continue, it said.

• Deutsche Telekom will publish its flotation prospectus next Friday detailing its economic condition, development plans and its future dividend policy. A consortium of Goldman Sachs, Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank will manage the flotation.

• Japanese August retail sales fell 1.6 per cent year-on-year, an improvement on July when they fell 4.1 per cent year-on-year, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry said.

London Docklands rail extension funded by £165m bond

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport Correspondent

A £165m bond was yesterday issued through BZW, the investment bank, to help fund the £200m Lewisham extension of the Docklands Light Railway in London. Work on the extension started yesterday, immediately after the announcement of the successful bidder.

The contract to run the extension has been won by City

Greenwich Lewisham Rail Link (GLL), a consortium of John Mowlem, Hyder Investments, London Electricity and Mitsui & Co. And in a deal reminiscent of the Channel Tunnel project, the work is to be carried out by LRG contractors, a consortium comprising Mowlem Civil Engineering and MBK Rail Link Construction in a joint venture with Nishimatsu Construction.

The GLL consortium has a 25-year concession to finance,

design, construct and maintain the 4.2-kilometre extension, which will run through two new tunnels under the Thames. There will be seven new stations, although two will replace existing ones, and it will give an estimated 500,000 Londoners access to the combined DLR/Tube network.

Passengers will be charged a premium rate to use the Lewisham extension, above the normal London zonal rates, to ensure that it generates sufficient funds.

Funding from Greenwich Council has now ensured that the station at Cutty Sark will be built and Lewisham Council will contribute £4.8m towards the cost of the project. The extension will not be completed until early in the year 2000, a year later than originally envisaged. This will mean that it will be ready for most of the year's Millennium celebrations

at Greenwich, although it will be finished too late for the big party expected for 31 December 1999.

The 24-year bond issue is being launched by BZW, whose staff are moving shortly to Canary Wharf, which is on the DLR. BZW said last night that there had been a good demand for the bonds which were priced on a yield of 9.33 per cent, 1.3 per cent above the comparable gilt-edge stock.

The company is also seeking a new chief executive to replace its executive chairman Henry Sweetbaum, who stepped down in June. John Napier, the former WH Smith finance director, was appointed a non-executive director of Wickes earlier this month. This fuelled speculation that he might take over as non-executive chairman. Bill Hoskins, the former Laporte finance director, has joined Wickes in the finance role.

Wickes is likely to be a takeover target once the holes in its financial position has been secured.

Building market not as safe as houses

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN
EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

Tarmac's housing arm, has a 12,000-a-year target. In volume terms, these structural changes are having a profoundly negative impact on builders' merchants as demand from small, local jobbers dries up.

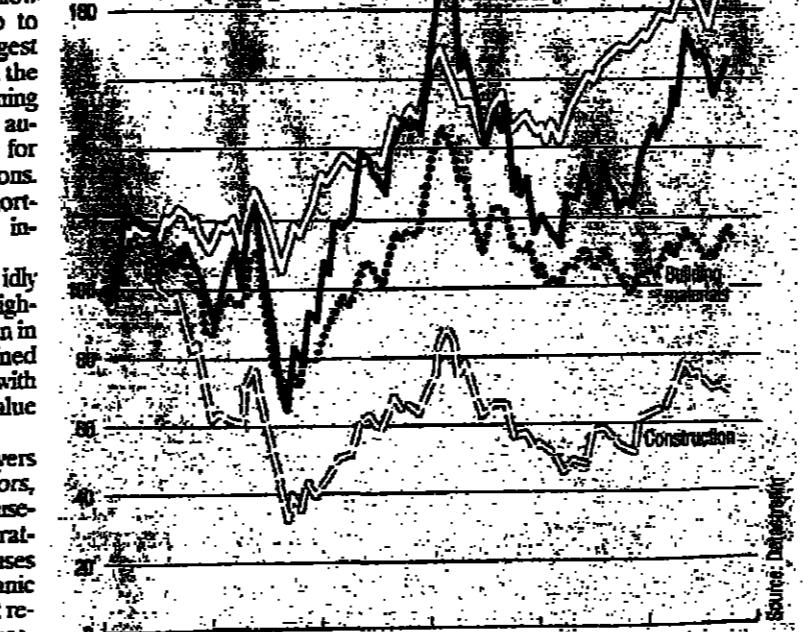
For building materials groups, the patchy state of the UK housing market would matter less if their aggregate activities were pre-occupied with major infrastructure projects or

benefiting from better European markets. Neither is the case.

The UK roads programme is being cut to ribbons, paring contractors' margins to the bone, while everyone apart from Tarmac is bad-mouthing the Government's Private Finance Initiative for its administrative delays and funding problems.

On the Continent, the outlook is just as poor, especially in Germany.

THE BUILDING INDUSTRY LAGS THE MARKET



Apart from RMC, the building materials sector would have investors believe that the bad winter weather which decimated first-half profits was an act of God and that the underlying situation is improving.

But the overall German construction market is set to decline this year for the first time since the Berlin Wall came down and it will almost certainly contract again in 1997. The same goes for France and any other country that is politically serious about signing up for a single European currency.

Faced with such dire market conditions, British companies might think cost-cutting offers a quick fix. But apart from the horrendous expense involved in making our European neighbours redundant, the likes of Redland, RMC and PB Industries still find themselves producing tiles, concrete or plasterboard in high-wage, hard-currency countries.

All of which makes stock-picking a highly selective exercise. Among housebuilders, Berkeley's track record of unbroken earnings growth through thick and thin is still worth backing.

Elsewhere, Taylor Woodrow's exposure to growth markets in the Far East makes it the pick of the contractors, but builders' merchants, aggregates suppliers and other building materials groups are best avoided.

Shire has some serious drugs

It is easy to poke fun at Shire Pharmaceuticals, the biotechnology group which floated in February at 175p. A company which boasts as its main product an anti-dementia drug based on Galanthamine, a compound derived from daffodils, and is searching for a cure for "male erectile dysfunction" will prompt a wry smile in

certain quarters. But Shire deserves to be taken more seriously than many in a sector which generally appears to be based on very insecure foundations.

For a start, profit last year of £2.87m gave Shire a blue-chip tinge in a sea of mainly loss-making rivals. Admittedly the surplus, which replaced a loss of £7.05m last time, was mainly due to a maiden £1.88m contribution from Imperial Pharmaceutical Services (now renamed Shire Pharmaceutical Contracts), acquired a year ago.

But with 26 products on the market, Shire has a decent conventional drugs business ranging from migraine treatments to osteoporosis therapies, where it has half the UK market. That lot chipped in a solid 30 per cent rise in sales to £28.96m in the year to June.

Less predictable is the £1.7m from licensing and development fees, which soared from £210,000 last year. The figures were swollen by an £8.2m payment from Johnson & Johnson subsidiary Janssen, which is paying for the development of Galanthamine (to be branded as Reminyl) in exchange for marketing rights. Some £4.8m of that figure was non-recurring and this sort of income will always be lumpy.

Thus far, Galanthamine is showing promising results in treating Alzheimer's disease, which could be a £2bn market by 2000.

But the unique selling proposition behind Shire is that the financing of its development portfolio is completely underwritten, either by third parties or its own sales. That leaves £25.4m of net cash free for acquisitions, of which two under discussion could account for half, and the purchase of drugs or projects from others.

Even with only a break-even result in prospect this year, Shire presents a low-risk way into the sector. The shares, up 3.5p to 190p, capitalise the group at £116m and look better value than many rivals.

market report / shares

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100
3,946.4 +13.2
FT-SE 250
4,406.2 +1.3
FT-SE 350
1,968.4 +5.4
SEAO VOLUME
6,260 shares,
35,131 bargains

Gilt's Index
176

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



Footsie gets high on heady mix of drugs and oils

An unlikely combination – drugs and oils – led the stock market higher.

Pharmaceuticals were encouraged by further evidence the world is becoming even more hooked on drugs and oils scored from the latest unrest in the Middle East.

The net result was the FT-SE 100 index managed to strike a 13.2 points gain to 3,946.4. It would probably have closed higher if New York had not made an indifferent opening.

Drugs were on a high following the disclosure of the value of prescriptions in the world's 10 largest markets had risen by 6 per cent in the first half of the year.

Globo Wellcome, additionally buoyed by further clearances for Zantac, gained 15p to 994p, and Zeneca, helped by the long-awaited US clearance for its Accolate asthma drug, jumped 33p to 1,580p.

SmithKline Beecham rose 16.5p to 771p and Medeva 4.5p to 252p.

On the oil pitch British Petroleum jumped 6.5p to 645p and Shell 6.5p to 978.5p. Enterprise Oil, with reserve upgrades going the rounds, flared 15p to 535p and Lusmo added 5p to 218.5p.

Throughout the day trading remained subdued. Institutions indulged in a little window dressing, attempting to put a touch of gloss on their third-quarter performances but there was little sign of any genuine investment interest.

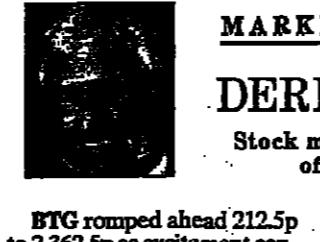
KTZ, the mining group, put on 30p to 977.5p on the firm copper price and P&O, despite the not surprising Office of Fair Trading interest in its Nedlloyd liaison, rose 15p to 618p.

TG Group, thought to be contemplating a bid for Senior Engineering, eased 9.5p to 572p. Senior firmed to 116.5p.

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year



BTG romped ahead 212.5p to 2,362.5p as excitement continued to grow about its catalogue of inventions.

Matthew Clark, the hard pressed cider group, had another eventful session. At one time the shares were down 29p but, by the close, they were showing a 12p uplift to 518.5p. Kwik Save, the food discounter, had no such luck. With Barclays de Zoete Wedd and NatWest Securities adding their voices to the sell chorus the shares fell a further 3.5p to 309p.

NatWest's Tony MacNearney thinks a restructuring is imminent. He says the uncertainty it creates together an expected

25 per cent dividend cut make the shares a sell.

House of Fraser, the department stores chain, gained 4.5p on talk of a bid, probably from Burton. Yorkshire-Tyne Tees put on 15p to 1,175p, awaiting the expected Granada bid.

Coats Consulting, a recruitment group, firmed to 57p. Scottish Television sold its 27.5p per cent stake at 52p through stockbroker Collins Stewart to institutions.

Courtesy Leisure, the London wine bar chain, jumped 6.5p to 19.75p following the arrival of restaurateur Robert Earl with a 3.25 per cent interest.

Lopez, the media group, gained 2.5p to 25.5p; there are suggestions of a link with Birkdale, unchanged at 7p.

Humbleigh slumped 122.5p to 640p, a two-day fall of 237.5p. The healthcare group is the latest example of the market's unrelenting approach to high flyers which fail to meet expectations.

On Thursday the group, with an outstanding record, announced a reasonable set of figures but not as good as the market had anticipated. Even a bonus issue and a move from USM to full listing failed to cushion the blow.

Aminex, with oil interests in the former Soviet Union, was firm at 55p. The shareholders meeting to approve the involvement of the World Bank will be called next week.

Once the World Bank deal, involving a 20 per cent stake and a near £20m loan, is cleared Aminex is likely to

sharply increase its oil operations.

Shalbane, making products for the motor industry, drove on to AIM, touching 137.5p against a 125p placing.

Sound system group Verity boomed 7.5p to 23.75p following a 31 per cent interim profits gain and the development of a new loudspeaker technology, named NXT.

It has created a company to handle NXT with outside shareholders taking up some of the capital at a price implying an £15m valuation.

Goodwin, a little foundry business, held at 60.5p. The shares are likely to move higher on Monday. The company reported a surprise 800 per cent profit advance to just over £2m. Shareholders get a special "loyalty" dividend, making a 17.94p total against 0.655p. The shares have climbed from 33p since March.

TAKING STOCK

■ Castle Mill International, nudging 100p before the 1987 crash, is at last on the verge of completing its protracted restructuring. Two banks have agreed to slash the amount due from \$4.1m to \$725,000 and CMI is raising \$2m through a placing and open offer at 2.5p.

The company, although getting back into profit last year, has been struggling against a debt mountain, incurred through over expansion, since 1991.

Once the restructuring is through CMI, a textile business, is likely to seek acquisitions. The shares rose 0.5p to 3.25p.

■ Deltron Electronics, an electrical components supplier, should make a bright market debut on Monday. The shares were placed at 150p and an opening price of around 165p is likely.

	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	PREVIOUS	Index
Banking, Merchant								
Barclays	1,000	980	Barclays	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Banque Paribas	1,000	980	Banque Paribas	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
BNP	1,000	980	BNP	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
BSB	1,000	980	BSB	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
City Group	1,000	980	City Group	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
HSBC	1,000	980	HSBC	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
ICI	1,000	980	ICI	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Lehman Brothers	1,000	980	Lehman Brothers	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Mitsubishi	1,000	980	Mitsubishi	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
NatWest	1,000	980	NatWest	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Paribas	1,000	980	Paribas	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Prudential	1,000	980	Prudential	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
RBS	1,000	980	RBS	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Santander	1,000	980	Santander	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Standard Chartered	1,000	980	Standard Chartered	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
UBS	1,000	980	UBS	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Woolworths	1,000	980	Woolworths	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Building, Construction								
AEG	1,000	980	AEG	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Abbey	1,000	980	Abbey	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Architects	1,000	980	Architects	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Armitage Shanks	1,000	980	Armitage Shanks	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Armstrong	1,000	980	Armstrong	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Balfour Beatty	1,000	980	Balfour Beatty	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Bovis	1,000	980	Bovis	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Brown & Root	1,000	980	Brown & Root	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Carillion	1,000	980	Carillion	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Costain	1,000	980	Costain	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
David Wilson	1,000	980	David Wilson	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Edwards	1,000	980	Edwards	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Flintoff	1,000	980	Flintoff	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Frederick	1,000	980	Frederick	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Groundwork	1,000	980	Groundwork	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Laing	1,000	980	Laing	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
McCarthy & Stone	1,000	980	McCarthy & Stone	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
McDonald	1,000	980	McDonald	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Modular	1,000	980	Modular	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Perkins	1,000	980	Perkins	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Skanska	1,000	980	Skanska	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Turner	1,000	980	Turner	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Whitbread	1,000	980	Whitbread	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Chemicals								
Aldrich	1,000	980	Aldrich	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Archer Daniels Midland	1,000	980	Archer Daniels Midland	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Avon	1,000	980	Avon	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Bayer	1,000	980	Bayer	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
BASF	1,000	980	BASF	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Chemical Corp of America	1,000	980	Chemical Corp of America	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Dow	1,000	980	Dow	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
E.I. du Pont de Nemours	1,000	980	E.I. du Pont de Nemours	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Exxon	1,000	980	Exxon	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Fluka	1,000	980	Fluka	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
Gates & Crellin	1,000	980	Gates & Crellin	980	-10	1,000	980	1,000
ICI								

City's
success
rubs off
on Rider

ASCOT'S FESTIVAL OF RACING: The meeting's highlight rekindles old rivalry but the French raider may devour both protagonists

Late thrust decisive for Ashkalani

RICHARD EDMONDSON

Twelve months ago this weekend Sheikh Mohammed shepherded a bunch of nervous pressmen into a private Ascot chalet and instructed that the coffee should be poured. As the fine bone-china cups rattled in their saucers Dubai's crown prince announced that one of racing's greatest alliances was virtually over as he had lost his patience with Henry Cecil.

The precise reason why this fissure developed is no clearer now than it was that day. There are theories. Sheikh Mohammed certainly considered Cecil was getting a little too big for his tasseled boots and that his wife, Natalie, was straying from his idea of how a trainer's wife should behave (*i.e.* smile sweetly and occasionally flick a duster over the Welsh dresser).

One proposition was that the Arab had taken business-ending umbrage at the discovery that Cecil had not been forthright about an injury to Mark Of Es-

teem. The removal of that colt from Warren Place probably hurt Cecil more than any other as he went on to recover in the Emirates before collecting the 2,000 Guineas the following spring. He now has the capability to damage the Newmarket man still further this afternoon when he contests a quite exceptional Queen Elizabeth II Stakes at Ascot. If Mark Of Esteem is successful he will almost certainly help Saeed bin Suroor, the nominal head of the Sheikh's Godolphin operation, leap over



Sheikh Mohammed: vexed

Cecil at the head of the trainers' championship.

Of today's seven runners (an annoying number for a race which could have presented good each-way possibilities) as the fine bone-china cups rattled in their saucers Dubai's crown prince announced that one of racing's greatest alliances was virtually over as he had lost his patience with Henry Cecil.

The removal of that colt from Warren Place probably hurt Cecil more than any other as he went on to recover in the Emirates before collecting the 2,000 Guineas the following spring. He now has the capability to damage the Newmarket man still further this afternoon when he contests a quite exceptional Queen Elizabeth II Stakes at Ascot. If Mark Of Esteem is successful he will almost certainly help Saeed bin Suroor, the nominal head of the Sheikh's Godolphin operation, leap over

forwards out \$30,000 at Park Paddocks two years ago to secure the filly. That money now looks well spent, though there is the suggestion that Bosra Sham may have left her career behind in the race that made it.

For those who like to settle

on the sofa and bathe in their own cleverness about having secured the value option, there is only one alternative. Bijou D'Inde's double linked form with both Mark Of Esteem and the French challenger, Ashkalani, yet he remains a much larger price than either. This draws a reaction close to anger from Mark Johnston, as Bijou D'Inde's position in the market is not only a comment on the horse, it also implies that the trainer himself is not up to securing a prize of this nature.

As Johnston has already won a Classic it is unworthy for people to look down on him and it is not a bias he much enjoys. "I thought we'd got over all that prejudice by now, but it's everybody else's problem and not mine," the Middleham trainer

said yesterday. "I think Bijou D'Inde's price is insulting. If the horse runs up to his Ascot form [when he beat Ashkalani] he's got to just about win it."

"Having said that I'm not as confident as I'd like to be, but that's got nothing to do with the opposition. The problem is getting the horse there in the same condition that I had him at Ascot. The ground on the gallops is rock hard so we haven't really let him down on it and I don't know if his form at home is quite as good as in mid-summer."

The trainer must have thought that statistic was going to be left behind in the St James's Palace

Stakes at the Royal meeting,

when his chestnut swept into the lead a furlong out, but while De Royer Dupre's topper was in the air his runner was clawed back by Bijou D'Inde.

Michael Kinane was blamed

(a trifling unifinity) for making his challenge too early that day, though it has to be said that Ashkalani looks a much more potent performer when produced in the dying moments. His last effort was stunningly persuasive as Gerard Mossé, this afternoon's pilot, cut down talented rivals in the Prix du Moulin

3.20 QUEEN ELIZABETH II STAKES (CLASS A) (Group 1) £250,000 1m Penalty Value £195,020

PENALTIES 1 21-2124 CHAINWOOD FOREST (GB) (Sire) Saeed bin Suroor 4 9 1 M Khan 3 24 (Royal blue, white cap)

2 351112 FIRST ISLAND (GB) (Sire) (2) (Miles Racing) G Magie 4 9 1 M Khan 4 125 (Chocolate, gold braid and sleeves, patterned cap)

3 26-0215 SUNSET LINE (GB) (Sire) M Alcazar & Michael Stoute 6 9 1 T O'Brien 6 120 (Royal blue, white chevron, light blue cap)

4 11-1121 ASHKALANI (FR) (Sire) (1) Aga Khan 3 de Royer Dupre 3 8 11 0 Miles 2 123 (Silver, red and ochre, green cap)

5 5-3423 BIJOU D'INDE (GB) (Sire) C 9 7 11 0 Weavers 1 124 (Light blue and yellow check, red sleeves and cap)

6 21-111 MARK OF ESTEEM (GB) (Sire) Saeed bin Suroor 3 8 11 1 Dohert 5 125 (Royal blue)

7 11-11 ROSA SHAM (GB) (Sire) (2) (Miles Racing) H Coat 3 8 8 7 Deasy 7 221 (Dark green, black chevron, white cap, black star) - 7 declared -

BESTING: 5-2 Ashkalani, Rosa Sham, 11-4 Mark of Esteem, 25-2 First Island, 8-1 Bijou D'Inde, 22-1 Chainwood Forest, 25-1 Sunset Line

1996: Sire 3 8 11 W Carson 52 2 Durdy 7 20

FORM GUIDE

Considering ROSA SHAM had a foot injury prior to her victory in the 2,000 Guineas she may well be an even better bet to win her first race. Eight lengths back in third was Saeed bin Suroor, who later took the Group One Prix Du Moulin De Diane at Chantilly. Rosa Sham has had further problems with his foot since the Guineas, but has been given all the necessary time to regain his fitness. Miles of Esteem fought well in the 2,000 Guineas and has come from the top but is not quite up to Ascot. He has shown some good form in France in the spring and then lost out in a trifling Royal Ascot finish with Bijou D'Inde before winning this month's Prix du Moulin de Longchamp after a 12-furlong absence. Bijou D'Inde was a close third in the Derby and has had a good turn of foot, although when he beat Chainwood Forest in the Sussex Stakes, the extended 10 furlongs of the International Stakes at York (second to Halling) would have been as far as he wants to go to be at his most effective.

Selection: ROSA SHAM

ASCOT'S SUNDAY CARD
WITH HYPERION'S TIPS
11.30 AMBREE
12.15 TOMORROW'S
14.30 DEPARTMENT ON SUNDAY



Bijou D'Inde: other wealthy owners

Fleet leads Harwood's final push

Chris Corrigan talks to the top trainer aiming for one last big Ascot success

Consort (Chris Rutter) contest the Tote Festival Handicap (3.55) today. Kayee, a seven-year-old grey, has a fine record on this course while Consort is a lightly raced three-year-old.

Harwood commented: "Each is capable of running a really good race. I wouldn't know which has the better chance. A lot depends on the draw. In these big-field, seven-furlong races at Ascot the draw is so important." Low numbers may have an advantage this time.

Better Offer, in the Tote Sunday Special Handicap (4.25) tomorrow, has a difficult task. Harwood concedes: "He's gone up in the weights and, of the four horses, he's got the toughest test."

Kayee (Tony Clark) and

a manoeuvre that was close to insolence. Ashkalani has better foes to deal with today, but the reputation and record he brings from France is so awesome that he must be the selection.

Nita, who has recently been taking the eye in defeat, is better over 10 furlongs, but a touch of staying power will not go amiss in this competitive affair. She should go well. Cabaret, seems sure to find that tiny plumb enough given that she might even blossom over 12 furlongs, whereas Polka isn't sure to have the stamina. PANATA comes into this as the maiden and handicaps route and could still be won in a 200 higher mark than her first handicap success at Chelmsford in July. She is certainly less exposed than most, half a mile from the right stable and was unlucky in running when fourth in a 0-100 affair at Goodwood last time. There are very few of these that a case can be made for on the handicap even though there are plenty of runs in Listed races to braise through, but potentially, whose record needs 121, since she was fitted with a tongue-tie, needed only firm hands and heels riding to win a listed handicap at Sandown last time and she might just be a cut better than her bare form suggests.

Selection: PANATA

5.00 BLUE SEAL STAKES (CLASS B) £20,000 added 2YO Fillies

of Penality Value £12,330

1 1 CORINI (GB) (K Abdulla) H Coat 8 11 0 Pat Eddery 1
2 CHILI BOUCHER (GB) (John N Simpkin) D Marks 8 8 0 G Dibbles 2
3 DUST DANCER (GB) (Hermes Stud) J Dunlop 8 8 0 T O'Brien 3
4 2 LOCHMACH (GB) (Sire) J Baker 8 8 0 J Doherty 5
5 PLASIER D'AMOUR (Fr) (Tatoo) N Calligari 8 8 0 P Doherty 4
- 5 declared -

BESTING: 6-4 Corini, 6-2 Dust Dancer, 6-1 Lochmache, 10-1 Plasier d'Amour, 50-1 Chili Boucher

FORM GUIDE

CORINI seems the best option here. She is by Mechanism out of a winning dam closely related to Zafonic's son, Zafonic, and is likely to improve quite a bit for her winning debut at Lingfield (7) where she had a length and a half in hand of Chorus Song. Dust Dancer, by Swan, Dancer out of a well-related dam, will appreciate a longer trip than that but need the spin when 10th to No Wonder at Kempton (7), running on well nonetheless. Lochmache is by Night Shift out of Peaches' well-bred son of Lochmache and she was eye-catching second to Blameless at Blameless at Kempton (6) after missing the break. Probably the one to beat, Plasier d'Amour is a sister to Denehill Dancer and must be noted in the betting. Doug Marks must think a lot of Chili Boucher to send her off in this. Selection: CORINI

Nita, who has recently been taking the eye in defeat, is better over 10 furlongs, but a touch of staying power will not go amiss in this competitive affair. She should go well. Cabaret, seems sure to find that tiny plumb enough given that she might even blossom over 12 furlongs, whereas Polka isn't sure to have the stamina. PANATA comes into this as the maiden and handicaps route and could still be won in a 200 higher mark than her first handicap success at Chelmsford in July. She is certainly less exposed than most, half a mile from the right stable and was unlucky in running when fourth in a 0-100 affair at Goodwood last time. There are very few of these that a case can be made for on the handicap even though there are plenty of runs in Listed races to braise through, but potentially, whose record needs 121, since she was fitted with a tongue-tie, needed only firm hands and heels riding to win a listed handicap at Sandown last time and she might just be a cut better than her bare form suggests.

Selection: PANATA

5.35 GORDON CARTER HANDICAP (CLASS C) £20,000 added 2YO Fillies

of Penality Value £14,655

1 1-3520 FURYLIA CREST (GB) (Sire) (2) (Sequel) H Coat 9 10 1 J Doherty 2 1
2 0-3632 HORSES FLUTTER (GB) (Sire) M McManus 9 10 1 P Doherty 22
3 0-0145 CELESTIAL HERB (GB) (Sire) M McManus 9 10 1 P Doherty 16
4 0-3045 WORLD FERNS (GB) (Sire) (2) (Sire) C 9 10 1 W Riddell 16
5 0-2202 KODA (GB) (Sire) (2) (Sire) Niall Nasta 9 10 1 L Chastek 11
6 0-2202 KODA (GB) (Sire) (2) (Sire) Niall Nasta 9 10 1 L Chastek 11
7 0-2202 KODA (GB) (Sire) (2) (Sire) Niall Nasta 9 10 1 L Chastek 11
8 0-2202 KODA (GB) (Sire) (2) (Sire) Niall Nasta 9 10 1 L Chastek 11
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Instead of disappearing into the lower divisions or on to television when he stepped down as England manager, Bobby Robson has carved out a hugely successful career in Europe. He talked to Glenn Moore in Barcelona

The man with the world at his feet

Bobby Robson can be forgiven a moment of wistfulness when news of Glenn Hoddle's latest England squad filtered through to Spain this week. Poland, next week's Wembley opponents, evoke a memory or two for Robson.

England's 3-0 win over the Poles in the 1986 Mexico World Cup probably saved his job as England manager. A hard-earned draw in Katowice three years later won England a place in Italia '90 and the subsequent painful glory of a semi-final exit on penalties.

Robson still regards his time as England manager as the highlight of a life in football, but although the memories would have come flooding back, he would not have dwelt on them long. The 63-year-old is no sun-seeking Brit in retirement on the Spanish Costa. Barely a year after surgery for cancer, he is the manager of the biggest club in the world.

Barcelona may have only won one European Cup, but they are bigger than Manchester United or Juventus, bigger even than their hated rivals, Real Madrid. They have their own bank, the Pope is a member of

The Bobby Robson file

Born: 18 Feb 1933, Co Durham.
Played: 1954-60 West Bromwich Albion.
England caps: 20 (played in 1958 and 1962 World Cups).
Management career: Fulham (1968-1970); Ipswich (1970-1982); England (1982-90); PSV Eindhoven (1990-92); Sporting Lisbon (1992-93); Porto (1994-95); Barcelona (1995-).
Honours: FA Cup semi-finals (1990); quarter-finals (1989); UEFA Cup (1981); FA Cup (1978); Dutch title (1990/91, 1991/92); Portuguese title (1994/95, 1995/96); Portuguese cup (1994).

the fan club, and the demand to watch them exceeds even the 115,000 capacity of the cavernous Nou Camp – a veritable amphitheatre of dreams. They are not so much a team as a expression of Catalan nationalism.

"It is a colossal job," Robson said earlier this week. "It is a great challenge, a great opportunity. I'm really enjoying it. It is a pressure-cooker, but I am used to that. I can handle that. If I get results, it will be more than pleasurable. If I don't, well it isn't pleasurable anywhere if you don't. That's the same the world over."

Maybe, but the extra element in Barcelona is the club's role in the community. Catalonia has long regarded itself as an separate country yet, for more than 30 years under Franco's dictatorship, football was the only way they could express their independence. Even now the club – almost alone in football – refuses to sully its famous magenta and blue shirts with a sponsors' name.

"The job had to go to an experienced coach," Robson said. "I do not think a young coach could handle it here. It doesn't frighten me, that's the thing. If it had, I would not have taken it. I am experienced, I've been around the world. I've had my own successes."



Under orders: Bobby Robson leaves Ronaldo, the Barcelona and Brazil striker, in no doubt as to what he wants him to do on the pitch

This is the same division of responsibility that Arsenal are attempting, and Robson said of Arsene Wenger, the new manager at Highbury: "He is a good fellow, I know him quite well. He is very intelligent. I think he will do all right if he does not have to get involved in all those things like buying toilet rolls and so on."

What does he miss? "My family, I have three grandchildren and one on the way. I never thought I'd stay abroad – I went to Holland for two years and thought I would come back. I like it. I like the life, I like the job, just working with the team. I keep in touch with England, but I don't have time to miss things."

He is, though, eager to hear the latest results and gossip, asking first about Newcastle. Intrigued, too, at the thought of Ipswich and Fulham, the two English clubs he managed, meeting in the Coca-Cola Cup. Robson is the second ex-Fulham manager to coach Barcelona. Vic Buckingham was the first. Robson struggled when he succeeded him at Craven Cottage in 1968 and was sacked after 10 months. But for Ipswich, one of England's best managerial careers may have been stymied at birth.

Barcelona's international players

Spain: Abelardo, Amor, Cuadrado, Sagi, Guardiola, De la Peña, Funes, Nieto, Pizzi, Luis Enrique, Belotti.
Portugal: Vitor Baia, Fernando Couto, Rigo.
Brazil: Romário, Gómez.
Romania: Popescu.
France: Bancé.
Bulgaria: Stoichkov.

Robson may be over for England's match next Wednesday. Of Glenn Hoddle, he said: "He is very studious, he has a football brain. If he can handle it, he will do well. I will never forget my England experience. You can't go any higher than that. It was marvellous."

Well, most of it. Ask him how he felt watching the penalty shoot-out with Germany this summer and his voice drops to a whisper. "Painful! Absolutely. I could not believe how history repeated itself, an absolute replica. Just what happened to me in 1990. I felt for Terry [Venables]. I felt it was inevitable that it would go to penalties, but I did not think we would lose – but they never miss them."

Robson's voice is now so quiet I can hardly hear him. It feels like intruding on a private grief. But he keeps it in perspective, and did so even before last year's brush with death when he needed an operation for a cancerous growth on his left cheekbone.

It might have pushed some men into retirement, but Robson concluded: "My gut reaction is to keep going. I thrive on it. My health is fine. The prognosis is excellent. I am very much in love with it – I am immersed in football."

Photograph: Albert Olive/EPA

taken aback by the intensity of both. When we spoke, he had just come out of a press conference and said: "Some of the questions are quite remarkable considering we are top of the league."

At least they are football questions. For much of his reign as England manager, Robson was crudely vilified in the tabloid press and his last year in the job was marred by lurid exposure of his personal life.

"The media here is only football-oriented. It sticks to the industry," he said. It is the only time in our conversation that he speaks with real vehemence. Most of the time his baritone voice crackles with the enthusiasm which has hallmark his career.

Other distinguishing features are decency and occasional scattiness. The

tale is often told of his meeting Bryan Robson during an England trip. "Hello Bobby," said Bobby. "No," Bryan said. "You're Bobby, I'm Bryan."

He remains unaffected by the trappings of fame, even choosing a small residence set back from the sea rather than a grand house on the front because he did not want people to think he was showing off.

"Local reaction has been very good," Robson said. "I am following Glenn [Cruyff], who had been here a long time and had a lot of success. But for the last two years they won nothing, so that makes it a little easier, although I suppose if he had won the championship for the last two years he would still be here."

"Johan preferred a sweeper and two markers. I have dislodged that, I'm playing with a flat back four, two

players wide – I like width – and two box-to-box midfielders. I've bought Ronaldo to play up front and I play with one behind him. Johan never played that way."

Good players, of course, can adapt and Robson has more good players than most. He inherited Gheorghe Popescu, Luis Figo and a clutch of Spanish internationals. This summer, Barcelona signed Ronaldo for £13m from PSV, another Brazilian, Giovani, returning hero Hristo Stoichkov, Laurent Blanc – the man keeping Chelsea's Franck Leboeuf out of the French team – Vítor Baia, Portugal's goalkeeper, and Fernando Couto. They also bought Luis Enrique and Juan Antonio Pizzi on the domestic market. Total cost: £28m.

There is no way Robson can play all his 19 internationals at once. "It is not easy. I have a squad of 25 and they are all good. But they are used to this situation, they grew up with it. They don't moan, they don't ask for a transfer. They are happy to wait their turn. I don't have the problems I would have in England."

Barcelona's investment was part of a total of £130m pre-season spending by Liga teams, £55m more than the Premiership. "The world is the club's oyster," Robson said. "The Bosman ruling helps, but it does mean you have to commit to players – Ronaldo and Baia have signed for eight years."

I leave all that [negotiations concerning transfers and contracts] to the directors and I don't miss it. My job is working with players every day, coming in and being on the training field."

No. 155 Barnet
FAN'S EYE VIEW
by Jon Brodkin

A warm, comforting feeling glowed inside me when it was announced, only days before the start of the season, that Ray Clemence had vacated the manager's position at Barnet in order to assume the role of goalkeeping coach in Glenn Hoddle's new England set-up.

Not that the sensation was brought on by pride at seeing Barnet's first graduate to England international duty; or even by malicious satisfaction at hearing of Clemence's departure. After all, he had inherited arguably the worst team ever to grace the Football League, seen them relegated by 25 points, and subsequently transformed the club into strong candidates for promotion from the Third Division.

It was just that Barnet somehow felt like Barnet again. After two and a half years of relative stability, here was a good old-fashioned crisis to bring memories of the halcyon Fry/Flashman era, with its innumerable sackings and winding-up orders, flooding back. The sweet stench of turmoil seemed to be filling the air around Underhill once again, and boy it felt good to be back.

To add to the drama, a swift glance at football's unemployed list briefly sparked excited mutterings about a possible replacement for Clemence. Surely George Graham would relish the opportunity to begin his managerial recuperation at Barnet, less than 10 miles from his London home. Perhaps Johan Cruyff, freshly sacked by Barcelona, was in fact visiting England in order to hold secret talks with the Barnet chairman, Tony Kleanthous.

Alas no. Kleanthous instead promoted Clemence's No 2, Terry Bullivant, a "veteran" of over 150 games with Fulham, Aston Villa, Charlton and Brentford. Bullivant has made the same any other way.

MAJOR WEEKEND FOOTBALL FIXTURES AND POOLS CHECK

TODAY
3.0 unless stated

FA Carling Premiership

	First Division	Second Division
3.0 unless stated	30 Colchester v Doncaster	48 Ayv v Stevenage
8. Bursley v Gresley	31 Darlington v Fulham	- Clyde v Brechin
9. Birmingham v QPR	32 Exeter v Cambridge Utd	- Dumbarton v Steinhousemuir
10. Bolton v Stoke	33 Hartlepools v Chester	- Hamilton v Queen of the South
11. Cheltenham v Oldham	34 Lincoln v Cardiff	- Livingston v Berwick
12. Crystal Palace v Southampton	35 Mansfield v Hereford	-
13. Huddersfield v Reading	36 Northampton v Brighton	-
14. Ipswich v West Ham	37 Rochdale v Leyton Orient	-
15. Middlesbrough v Walsall	38 Scarborough v Wigan	-
16. Norwich v Tranmere	39 Scunthorpe v Barnet	-
17. Oxford Utd v Portsmouth	40 Sheffield Utd v Manchester City	-
18. Sheff Wed v Middlesbrough	27 West Bromwich v Ipswich	- Torquay v Carlisle
19. Derby v Coventry	28 Bradford v York	-
20. Ipswich v Bristol City	29 Bristol Rovers v Chesterfield	- Alloa v East Stirlingshire
21. Macclesfield v Forest Green	30 Burnley v Bristol City	- Arbroath v Cowdenbeath
22. Middlesbrough v Nottingham Forest	21 Crewe v Plymouth	- Montrose v Forfar
23. Middlesbrough v Southampton	22 Luton v Blackpool	- Queen's Park v Albion Rovers
24. Middlesbrough v Blackpool	23 Notts County v Wrexham	- Ross County v Inverness Caledonian Thistle
25. Middlesbrough v Walsall	24 Peterborough v Wycombe	-
26. Middlesbrough v Wigan	25 Preston v Millwall	-
27. Middlesbrough v Walsall	26 Rotherham v Bournemouth	-
28. Middlesbrough v Gillingham	27 Shrewsbury v Watford	-
29. Middlesbrough v Bury	28 Stockport v Gillingham	-
30. Middlesbrough v Walsall	29 Walsall v Bury	-

Nationwide League

	Premier Division	Second Division
4.0 unless stated	48 Accrington v Stevenage	-
5. Bury v Grimsby	31 Darlington v Fulham	- Clyde v Brechin
6. Birmingham v QPR	32 Exeter v Cambridge Utd	- Dumbarton v Steinhousemuir
7. Bolton v Stoke	33 Hartlepools v Chester	- Hamilton v Queen of the South
8. Cheltenham v Oldham	34 Lincoln v Cardiff	- Livingston v Berwick
9. Crystal Palace v Southampton	35 Mansfield v Hereford	-
10. Huddersfield v Reading	36 Northampton v Brighton	-
11. Ipswich v West Ham	37 Rochdale v Leyton Orient	-
12. Middlesbrough v Walsall	38 Scarborough v Wigan	-
13. Middlesbrough v Wigan	39 Scunthorpe v Barnet	-
14. Middlesbrough v Wigan	40 Sheffield Utd v Manchester City	-
15. Middlesbrough v Wigan	27 West Bromwich v Ipswich	- Torquay v Carlisle
16. Middlesbrough v Wigan	28 Bradford v York	-
17. Middlesbrough v Wigan	29 Bristol Rovers v Chesterfield	- Alloa v East Stirlingshire
18. Middlesbrough v Wigan	30 Burnley v Bristol City	- Arbroath v Cowdenbeath
19. Middlesbrough v Wigan	21 Crewe v Plymouth	- Montrose v Forfar
20. Middlesbrough v Wigan	22 Luton v Blackpool	- Queen's Park v Albion Rovers
21. Middlesbrough v Wigan	23 Notts County v Wrexham	- Ross County v Inverness Caledonian Thistle
22. Middlesbrough v Wigan	24 Peterborough v Wycombe	-
23. Middlesbrough v Wigan	25 Preston v Millwall	-
24. Middlesbrough v Wigan	26 Rotherham v Bournemouth	-
25. Middlesbrough v Wigan	27 Shrewsbury v Watford	-
26. Middlesbrough v Wigan	28 Stockport v Gillingham	-
27. Middlesbrough v Wigan	29 Walsall v Bury	-

Third Division

30 Colchester v Doncaster	48 Ayv v Stevenage
31 Darlington v Fulham	- Clyde v Brechin
32 Exeter v Cambridge Utd	- Dumbarton v Steinhousemuir
33 Hartlepools v Chester	- Hamilton v Queen of the South
34 Lincoln v Cardiff	- Livingston v Berwick
35 Mansfield v Hereford	-
36 Northampton v Brighton	-
37 Rochdale v Leyton Orient	-
38 Scarborough v Wigan	-
39 Scunthorpe v Barnet	-
40 Sheffield Utd v Manchester City	-
27 West Bromwich v Ipswich	- Torquay v Carlisle
28 Bradford v York	-
29 Bristol Rovers v Chesterfield	- Alloa v East Stirlingshire
30 Burnley v Bristol City	- Arbroath v Cowdenbeath
21 Crewe v Plymouth	- Montrose v Forfar
22 Luton v Blackpool	- Queen's Park v Albion Rovers
23 Notts County v Wrexham	- Ross County v Inverness Caledonian Thistle
24 Peterborough v Wycombe	-
25 Preston v Millwall	-
26 Rotherham v Bournemouth	-
27 Shrewsbury v Watford	-
28 Stockport v Gillingham	-
29 Walsall v Bury	-

FA Carling Premiership

Manchester Utd v

No doddle for editor Venables who fails to land Hoddle

According to George Graham, when Terry Venables was a 19-year-old Chelsea starlet, "he always carried around this battered old typewriter on which he'd endlessly bash out articles". So perhaps El Tel was destined to try his hand at journalism, a profession for which he has been known to show (depending on the journalist) the sort of respect he reserves for managing directors of certain electronic companies.

Apart from (rather successfully) managing several football teams, during his 53 years, Venables has launched a tailor's shop, designed a wig, written a novel, created a TV detective series, sung in a dance group, pioneered the first plastic football pitch, devised a board game and written the script for Euro '96 (even if the final chapter was an anticlimax). So you'd think editing a football magazine – in this case, the November issue of *FourFourTwo* – would be a

doddle for a man more used to making the headlines than writing them.

But as Venables later admitted, "this was very different" – from the moment he walked through the doors of Haymarket Publishing's offices to be greeted with chants of "Ing-er-land, Ing-er-land, Ing-er-land" from the ad blocks on the ground floor who had draped a Union Jack out of the window in his honour. Venables simply smiled good-naturedly and began talking weather to the receptionist. Much to her chagrin, she had to ask him to sign the visitors' book. "It's the rules, no exceptions," she had been told; not even for a new signing who had created almost as much of a stir in suburban Teddington as Alan Shearer arriving on Tyneside.

I was to be his "shadow" while he was editor (which explains my sympathy for David Davies, who "shadowed" El Tel while he was England

manager). Scribes, at home, Fratton Park – or on a car phone somewhere between the three – I had to vie for his attention with solicitors, book publishers (his latest tome was about to hit the streets) and assorted members of the press trying to get an angle on whether he wanted the QPR job.

Don Howe told me: "Terry isn't a bang-his-fists-on-the-table-kind-of-a-manager" – but I thought I'd discovered otherwise when we were discussing which four players to do in the "Boy's A Bit Special" section. Gary and Phil Neville, Sol Campbell and Jamie Redknapp were his choices. I suggested Nick Barnby, as his praise for the Middlesbrough striker seemed to know no bounds. "Let's have five then," says Venables. I explain we can only have four because of pagination. "I'm the editor. I want five," he retorts, thumping a fist on the table, before adding: "Only joking."

When Arsène Wenger perused Arsenal's position this week and in his best Jim Callaghan manner queried "Crisis, what crisis?" you could see his point. True, he did not know the team he is to manage was about to go out of the Uefa Cup, although he probably suspected it, but in League terms at least the club look to be in the rudest form of health.

A club with the classic ingredients for relegation – internal strife and an ageing back four – find themselves in third place in the Premiership this morning and if they defeat Sunderland at Highbury today they will go to the top, albeit until Liverpool and Newcastle play tomorrow and Monday respectively.

The last time the Gunners topped the League was 7 November 1992 and in the interim they have jettisoned two managers and had enough drugs and drink stories to keep

Guy Hodgson looks ahead to the weekend's football

EastEnders going for months. The portents were hardly bright when Pat Rice assumed control on Stewart Houston's departure but if they get three points today he will be able to hand over the management to Wenger on Monday with a 100 per cent record for three matches.

Not that Sunderland will be the pushovers they might have appeared when they were among the pre-season favourites to be relegated. They have won their last three matches, and although two of those were against Watford that were nevertheless revealed themselves to be difficult to beat even if they do not score many goals. To that end the absence of their record signing, the £1.3m Niall Quinn,

for a month with damaged knee ligaments is a significant setback.

It has not taken Rudi Gullit long to sound like a manager. When the Dutch master assumed control at Stamford Bridge last summer the talk was of beautiful football, a concept reinforced by the signings of Frank Leboeuf, Gianluca Vialli and Roberto Di Matteo. Two heavy defeats to Liverpool and Blackpool in a week, however, and his language was pure Tommy Docherty.

"It's not enough to have only quality," Gullit said as his team prepared to meet Nottingham Forest. "You have to combine it with passion and the will to win the game. If you don't have passion you can't perform." He will be yelling at Leboeuf to "put it in the mixer" next.

Which is something Everton, who face Sheffield Wednesday at Goodison, have never been afraid to do under Joe Royle, particularly when Duncan Ferguson is doing the mixing. This makes the injury to the Scottish striker particularly unfortunate because the mood is changing on Merseyside if the radio talk shows with supporters are anything to go by.

Suddenly the manager is being questioned which is extraordinary considering that one and a half matches into the season they had beaten Newcastle and were 2-0 up against Manchester United at Old Trafford. Since then their season has plummeted to the point they are without a win in eight matches and were knocked out of the Coca-Cola Cup by York on Tuesday.

Wednesday has that sinking feeling themselves after following up four successive wins that took them to the top of the Premiership with five matches left to pose a victory. They also have fitness amities with David Hirst and Mark Pemberstone, and several others doubtful.

Their problems pale into insignificance, however, in comparison to Coventry and Blackpool, who might have hoped to be involved in a six-pointer at this stage of the season given their financial outlay over the last two years but did not expect to have the word relegation prefixed to it.

Challenger will travel to Franklins Gardens in the hope that the injury will have cleared up, but it does not look promising.

Locked at the bottom of the table, that is, as Wenger might have said, a real crisis.

SPORTING DIGEST

Badminton

Britain's Joanne Goode and Julie Bradbury, the No 2 seeds, strolled through the third round of the US Open in Orange, California, with a 15-14 thrashing of the Korean Kim Kyeong-joo and Joann Park of Canada. Both progressed with different partners in their mixed doubles. Goode and Nick Powling beat the Canadian pair of Darryl Young and Denysse Julien 15-7, 15-7, while Bradbury and Simon Archer, seeded No 2, defeated the Indonesian team of Indra Irwansyah 15-12, 15-14, 15-9, 8-9. But Archer and Chris Hoad end up in the men's doubles 15-9, 15-4, to the No 2 seeds, Vic Kim Hock and Cheah Soon Kit of Malaysia.

Badminton tests a new scoring system next week, which could herald the biggest change in the sport since it began in 1893. Instead of playing best-of-three games, first to 15 points per game, the Dutch will experiment with best-of-five games, first to nine points.

US OPEN (Orange, Calif): Men's doubles: M. Goode/J. Bradbury (GBR) 15-9, 15-1; Women's doubles: J. Goode/C. Hoad (GBR) 15-9, 15-4; Mixed doubles: J. Goode/N. Powling (GBR) 15-7, 15-7, 15-9, 8-9; Men's singles: C. Hoad (GBR) 15-9, 15-4, 15-11, 15-9, 15-11; Women's singles: J. Bradbury (GBR) 15-9, 15-4, 15-11, 15-9, 15-11; Men's doubles: C. Hoad/M. Goode (GBR) 15-9, 15-4, 15-11, 15-9, 15-11; Women's doubles: J. Bradbury/C. Hoad (GBR) 15-9, 15-4, 15-11, 15-9, 15-11; Mixed doubles: C. Hoad/V. Kim Hock (Malaysia) 15-9, 15-4, 15-11, 15-9, 15-11; Men's singles: C. Hoad (GBR) 15-9, 15-4, 15-11, 15-9, 15-11; Women's singles: J. Bradbury (GBR) 15-9, 15-4, 15-11, 15-9, 15-11.

Cycling

Alex Zulle is the hot favourite to win his first Tour de France this weekend after defending the overall leader's yellow jersey on Friday's 20th stage, which ended in a mass sprint finish in Paris.

The Belgian's lead is now 10 seconds over the men's doublets 15-9, 15-4, to the No 2 seeds, Vic Kim Hock and Cheah Soon Kit of Malaysia.

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Boxing

The promoter Frank Warren has been forced to postpone next Tuesday's promotion at the Moonways Leisure Centre in Derby. Warren has been unable to arrange a replacement title fight after Burton's Nevile Brown has signed off only nine months as head coach of New England Revolution, who finished bottom of the Major League Soccer Eastern Conference and failed to qualify for the league's inaugural play-offs.

Equestrianism

BRITISH NATIONAL DRESSAGE CHAMPIONSHIPS (London): 1. Dressage: 1.10m: 1.12m: 1.14m: 1.16m: 1.18m: 1.20m: 1.22m: 1.24m: 1.26m: 1.28m: 1.30m: 1.32m: 1.34m: 1.36m: 1.38m: 1.40m: 1.42m: 1.44m: 1.46m: 1.48m: 1.50m: 1.52m: 1.54m: 1.56m: 1.58m: 1.60m: 1.62m: 1.64m: 1.66m: 1.68m: 1.70m: 1.72m: 1.74m: 1.76m: 1.78m: 1.80m: 1.82m: 1.84m: 1.86m: 1.88m: 1.90m: 1.92m: 1.94m: 1.96m: 1.98m: 1.00m: 1.02m: 1.04m: 1.06m: 1.08m: 1.10m: 1.12m: 1.14m: 1.16m: 1.18m: 1.20m: 1.22m: 1.24m: 1.26m: 1.28m: 1.30m: 1.32m: 1.34m: 1.36m: 1.38m: 1.40m: 1.42m: 1.44m: 1.46m: 1.48m: 1.50m: 1.52m: 1.54m: 1.56m: 1.58m: 1.60m: 1.62m: 1.64m: 1.66m: 1.68m: 1.70m: 1.72m: 1.74m: 1.76m: 1.78m: 1.80m: 1.82m: 1.84m: 1.86m: 1.88m: 1.90m: 1.92m: 1.94m: 1.96m: 1.98m: 1.00m: 1.02m: 1.04m: 1.06m: 1.08m: 1.10m: 1.12m: 1.14m: 1.16m: 1.18m: 1.20m: 1.22m: 1.24m: 1.26m: 1.28m: 1.30m: 1.32m: 1.34m: 1.36m: 1.38m: 1.40m: 1.42m: 1.44m: 1.46m: 1.48m: 1.50m: 1.52m: 1.54m: 1.56m: 1.58m: 1.60m: 1.62m: 1.64m: 1.66m: 1.68m: 1.70m: 1.72m: 1.74m: 1.76m: 1.78m: 1.80m: 1.82m: 1.84m: 1.86m: 1.88m: 1.90m: 1.92m: 1.94m: 1.96m: 1.98m: 1.00m: 1.02m: 1.04m: 1.06m: 1.08m: 1.10m: 1.12m: 1.14m: 1.16m: 1.18m: 1.20m: 1.22m: 1.24m: 1.26m: 1.28m: 1.30m: 1.32m: 1.34m: 1.36m: 1.38m: 1.40m: 1.42m: 1.44m: 1.46m: 1.48m: 1.50m: 1.52m: 1.54m: 1.56m: 1.58m: 1.60m: 1.62m: 1.64m: 1.66m: 1.68m: 1.70m: 1.72m: 1.74m: 1.76m: 1.78m: 1.80m: 1.82m: 1.84m: 1.86m: 1.88m: 1.90m: 1.92m: 1.94m: 1.96m: 1.98m: 1.00m: 1.02m: 1.04m: 1.06m: 1.08m: 1.10m: 1.12m: 1.14m: 1.16m: 1.18m: 1.20m: 1.22m: 1.24m: 1.26m: 1.28m: 1.30m: 1.32m: 1.34m: 1.36m: 1.38m: 1.40m: 1.42m: 1.44m: 1.46m: 1.48m: 1.50m: 1.52m: 1.54m: 1.56m: 1.58m: 1.60m: 1.62m: 1.64m: 1.66m: 1.68m: 1.70m: 1.72m: 1.74m: 1.76m: 1.78m: 1.80m: 1.82m: 1.84m: 1.86m: 1.88m: 1.90m: 1.92m: 1.94m: 1.96m: 1.98m: 1.00m: 1.02m: 1.04m: 1.06m: 1.08m: 1.10m: 1.12m: 1.14m: 1.16m: 1.18m: 1.20m: 1.22m: 1.24m: 1.26m: 1.28m: 1.30m: 1.32m: 1.34m: 1.36m: 1.38m: 1.40m: 1.42m: 1.44m: 1.46m: 1.48m: 1.50m: 1.52m: 1.54m: 1.56m: 1.58m: 1.60m: 1.62m: 1.64m: 1.66m: 1.68m: 1.70m: 1.72m: 1.74m: 1.76m: 1.78m: 1.80m: 1.82m: 1.84m: 1.86m: 1.88m: 1.90m: 1.92m: 1.94m: 1.96m: 1.98m: 1.00m: 1.02m: 1.04m: 1.06m: 1.08m: 1.10m: 1.12m: 1.14m: 1.16m: 1.18m: 1.20m: 1.22m: 1.24m: 1.26m: 1.28m: 1.30m: 1.32m: 1.34m: 1.36m: 1.38m: 1.40m: 1.42m: 1.44m: 1.46m: 1.48m: 1.50m: 1.52m: 1.54m: 1.56m: 1.58m: 1.60m: 1.62m: 1.64m: 1.66m: 1.68m: 1.70m: 1.72m: 1.74m: 1.76m: 1.78m: 1.80m: 1.82m: 1.84m: 1.86m: 1.88m: 1.90m: 1.92m: 1.94m: 1.96m: 1.98m: 1.00m: 1.02m: 1.04m: 1.06m: 1.08m: 1.10m: 1.12m: 1.14m: 1.16m: 1.18m: 1.20m: 1.22m: 1.24m: 1.26m: 1.28m: 1.30m: 1.32m: 1.34m: 1.36m: 1.38m: 1.40m: 1.42m: 1.44m: 1.46m: 1.48m: 1.50m: 1.52m: 1.54m: 1.56m: 1.58m: 1.60m: 1.62m: 1.64m: 1.66m: 1.68m: 1.70m: 1.72m: 1.74m: 1.76m: 1.78m: 1.80m: 1.82m: 1.84m: 1.86m: 1.88m: 1.90m: 1.92m: 1.94m: 1.96m: 1.98m: 1.00m: 1.02m: 1.04m: 1.06m: 1.08m: 1.10m: 1.12m: 1.14m: 1.16m: 1.18m: 1.20m: 1.22m: 1.24m: 1.26m: 1.28m: 1.30m: 1.32m: 1.34m: 1.36m: 1.38m: 1.40m: 1.42m: 1.44m: 1.46m: 1.48m: 1.50m: 1.52m: 1.54m: 1.56m: 1.58m: 1.60m: 1.62m: 1.64m: 1.66m: 1.68m: 1.70m: 1.72m: 1.74m: 1.76m: 1.78m: 1.80m: 1.82m: 1.84m: 1.86m: 1.88m: 1.90m: 1.92m: 1.94m: 1.96m: 1.98m: 1.00m: 1.02m: 1.04m: 1.06m: 1.08m: 1.10m: 1.12m: 1.14m: 1.16m: 1.18m: 1.20m: 1.22m: 1.24m: 1.26m: 1.28m: 1.30m: 1.32m: 1.34m: 1.36m: 1.38m: 1.40m: 1.42m: 1.44m: 1.46m: 1.48m: 1.50m: 1.52m: 1.54m: 1.56m: 1.58m: 1.60m: 1.62m: 1.64m: 1.66m: 1.68m: 1.70m: 1.72m: 1.74m: 1.76m: 1.78m: 1.80m: 1.82m: 1.84m: 1.86m: 1.88m: 1.90m: 1.92m: 1.94m: 1.96m: 1.98m: 1.00m: 1.02m: 1.04m: 1.06m: 1.08m: 1.10m: 1.12m: 1.14m: 1.16m: 1.18m: 1.20m: 1.22m: 1.24m: 1.26m: 1.28m: 1.30m: 1.32m: 1.34m: 1.36m: 1.38m: 1.40m: 1.42m: 1.44m: 1.46m: 1.48m: 1.50m: 1.52m: 1.54m: 1.56m: 1.58m: 1.60m: 1.6

SPORT

Gascoigne's extraordinary life on video

Football

ADAM SZRETER

A predictable chorus of disapproval was rising towards fever pitch in the tabloid press last night as details were released of a new documentary from the people who gave the world the Graham Taylor's catchphrase "Do I not like that?"

Chrysalis Productions, who made a name for themselves with the fly-on-the-wall film about Taylor's ill-fated reign as England manager, somehow managed to persuade "the most famous

man in Britain," otherwise known as Paul Gascoigne, to be the subject of similar scrutiny, recording a year in his life from when he returned from Lazio in Italy to sign for Rangers.

Judging from the transcript, *Gazza's Coming Home* should make fascinating viewing for football fans everywhere, but Gascoigne is going to have to put up with some familiar criticism, concentrating mainly on his remarks in the film about drinking, given the recent revelations of England's Euro 96 captain, Tony Adams, concerning his alcoholism.

The worst of it appears to be in answer to a question about whether British clubs encourage players to drink to improve team spirit. "I would say that definitely," Gascoigne replies. "We certainly do that at Rangers. You know if everything's going well they keep you know, obviously take everyone on the drink and, er, get drunk for a couple of days, and er, we go to the races or we have a game of golf. And that does keep the spirit together."

The thought of the Rangers players getting drunk for a couple of days does indeed boggle

'I DON'T HAVE THE PROBLEMS HERE I WOULD HAVE IN ENGLAND'
Bobby Robson talks to Glenn Moore about life at the top in Spain Page 24

Wright to explain attack on Pleat

The Football Association has confirmed that it will ask Ian Wright, the Arsenal striker, for his comments after an extraordinary attack on the Sheffield Wednesday manager, David Pleat.

Wright reportedly branded Pleat a "pervert" after the Wednesday manager protested to the FA over two alleged incidents involving Wright in the recent Premiership game at Highbury, which the Gunners won 4-1.

Wright is quoted in yesterday's *Daily Mail* as saying: "He [David Pleat] can do what he likes. He can report me to the FA, but I just ask why is he doing it. But if I do have to appear at the FA, I'll have my say about David Pleat. He's a pervert – and you can print that."

Wright was referring to newspaper revelations nine years ago that Pleat was cautioned by police three times for keto-crawling. The publicity forced him to resign as Tottenham manager. Pleat said yesterday: "Ian has been misled. His words aren't worthy of comment."

Joe Royle, the Everton manager, has been charged with bringing the game into disrepute by the FA, following comments he made to the referee David Elleray last weekend in the match against Blackburn after the dismissal of Duncan Ferguson.

Fred Reacher, the chairman of Nottingham Forest, will step down if moves to take over the club go ahead. The Forest board has met to discuss approaches made from potential buyers, and Reacher said: "I would have no hesitation personally in stepping down if the right deal could be struck. I am looking for sufficient capital coming into the club for us to keep pace with the Manchester Uniteds and Liverpools of this world."

Tottenham have taken the Italian defender Luca Luzzardi on a six-week trial from Brescia, but he is only allowed to play in friendly matches while Gerry Francis, the Spurs manager, decides whether to meet his £600,000 valuation.

Hill snubs Jordan and joins Arrows

Motor racing

DAVID TREMAYNE

Damon Hill, who is poised to win the Formula One world championship next month, announced last night that he will drive next year for the Arrows team, which has failed to win a single grand prix in its 18-year history.

Speaking in the London hotel where only weeks earlier he had revealed his controversial sacking by the Williams-Renault team, Hill left pundits in a state of disbelief when he announced that his new employer will be a team whose best result dates back to 1988, when they finished third in the Italian Grand Prix. Arrows are understood to have agreed to pay Hill \$6m (£3.8m) to drive for them next season.

Hill denied suggestions that he was taking a backward step in joining the Arrows team, which was bought by Tom Walkinshaw in July. "Tom is the archetypal race driver and team owner, a man I and others credit with turning round the fortunes of the Benetton team," he said. "He is the head of a successful international engineering team. He has offered me a truly rewarding package. It's a great challenge. Everything this man does and touches becomes a winner, and right now I am feeling very excited."

Following the announcement of his split with Williams, Hill's options had become fewer and fewer as the leading teams confirmed their line-ups for next year. The smart money had been on his driving for Jordan, although Jackie Stewart, who returns to Formula One with a new team next season, was also thought to be in contention. Jordan were understood to be offering Hill a similar deal to the one he has agreed with Arrows, although Stewart was almost certainly unable to match that offer.

Hill said he had been highly impressed after visiting TWR's

headquarters at Leafield near Oxford and viewing facilities that are second only to Williams'. He added: "Nobody is under any illusion over the task ahead. Winning in Formula One is not easy. But I was left in no doubt that the package and facilities Tom has are the beginnings of what I believe will be a winning team."

Hill's deal is for one year and is not dependent on his winning the world championship at the Japanese Grand Prix next month. Hill has only to finish in the first six places at Suzuka to guarantee winning the title. He declined to give any timescale for his victory aspirations with TWR.

For Walkinshaw, chairman of the TWR Group, the move to recruit Hill is entirely logical, and a tribute to his incisiveness. "I have been pretty impressed with what I have seen of Damon's driving, and I have always wanted a top-flight driver to lead this team," he said.

For Hill the reasons are less clear. Arrows as a team has been remarkable only for its failure to win a single grand prix since its birth in 1978.

Walkinshaw, a 50-year-old Scot, purchased a controlling interest in the team this summer from its founder, Jackie Oliver. Walkinshaw's record is one of success mixed with the occasional controversy. Tom Walkinshaw Racing (TWR) has been victorious in touring car and sports-car racing, with manufacturers such as Jaguar, Rover, Mazda and Volvo. Its Silk Cut Jaguars won the World Sportsscar Championship, and twice triumphed in the Le Mans 24 Hours endurance classic. His efforts as engineering director at Benetton led the Whitney-based team to win world championships with Michael Schumacher in 1994 and again in 1995.

Arrows' performance has not picked up noticeably since the takeover, but Walkinshaw has been concentrating on 1997

rather than wasting money investing in the existing car.

The move to TWR is also likely to mean that Hill will switch from the Goodyear tyres, on which he has enjoyed his 20 grands prix victories, to the traditional Japanese Bridgestone brand which is expected to come into Formula One next season after a prolonged series of tests this year. It is thought that Bridgestone's willingness to stump up the money cemented the deal with Hill.

Walkinshaw, a natural gambler, said: "I think you have to evaluate the potential of things and then take a decision, and I value the potential of Bridge-

stone. It's enormous. We've worked with them for 10 years on road tyres and in touring car racing in Australia, so we are familiar with their engineering people and their capabilities. I don't think it's a big risk and I think there's big potential in it."

Walkinshaw is expected to confirm the deal in Suzuka in two weeks' time. He also expects to announce that his cars will be fitted with the Yamaha V10 engine used this season by Tyrrell, and that his own impressive engine department will assist Yamaha in its development.

Frank Williams announced last month that he had signed the German driver, Heinz-Har-

ald Frentzen, to partner Jacques Villeneuve in 1997. Williams has not given any official reason for dropping Hill, but he has nevertheless been progressing up until Wednesday, when suddenly the lines to Jordan's Silverstone base went dead.

Walkinshaw has not built his empire without having high expectations of his employees. No amount of innate potential at TWR and Bridgestone can disguise the massive gamble that Hill has taken. He is aware that only strong performances will change the widely held belief that he opted to avoid Jordan, rather than face comparison with another Schumacher.

of Michael Schumacher's younger brother, Ralf, as confirmed driver of the second car. Dialogue with Jordan had nevertheless been progressing up until Wednesday, when suddenly the lines to Jordan's Silverstone base went dead.

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In tomorrow's *Independent on Sunday*, Andrew Baker translates the thoughts of the interpreters who are increasingly talking a good game in the Premiership this season.

Plus: The 52-year-old who should be athlete of the year Tales of the families left behind by Round the World yacht crews

Sue Montgomery on the race of the season at Ascot Ian Ridley on the blossoming of David Beckham Simon O'Hagan on Liverpool's Dominic effect

In Monday's 20-page sports section

Reports and analysis from a big weekend of sporting action

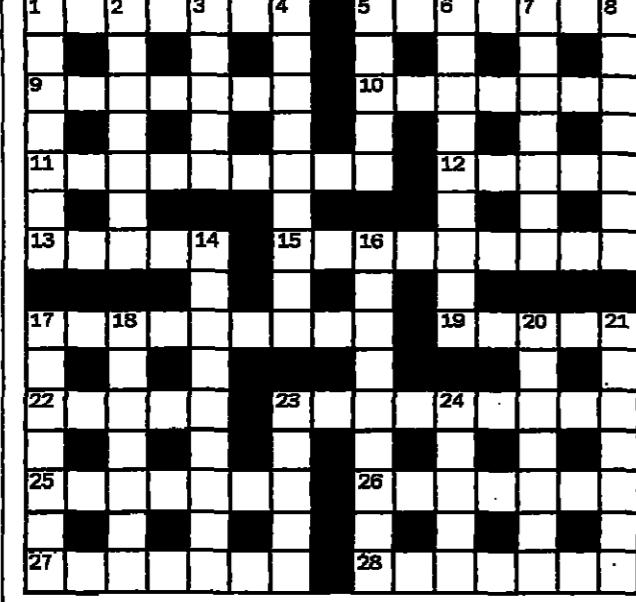
THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 5104. Saturday 28 September

By Phi

ACROSS

DOWN



Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution

OBSEQUIRABLE GAFFE ULTIMATUM SLANG
BUOY CASSANDRA NORDIC ALA
BAIRACHE MAILMAN DRAIN ESSENTIAL
SRK TBLIIC BENUSSEB
EKGONPATE ENTRY RESUMPTION MINI
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AVAIL ESTATECAR TROUNCE TOMBOLA
PITA POEERTI BZN
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The first five correct solutions in this week's crossword and Thursday's crossword will receive a free copy of *Observe & Report* (Volume 1, Number 1). All correct answers will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to: National Crossword, P.O. Box 4012, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BB. Please use the box number and provide your own postcode. Last week's winner: Bernard Cole, Horncastle, Lincolnshire. P. Miller, Cranfield.

In tomorrow's Independent on Sunday

"Both are known at their clubs, Liverpool and West Ham, for their first names, not only because everyone gets on with them but because, ironically, given their business, their second names are unpronounceable. Boris works with Patrick Berger, Amadeu mainly with Paulo Futre, but also with Florin Raducioiu, Ilie Dumitrescu, Slaven Bilic and anyone else at the club who fancies a natter."

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Plus: The 52-year-old who should be athlete of the year Tales of the families left behind by Round the World yacht crews

Sue Montgomery on the race of the season at Ascot Ian Ridley on the blossoming of David Beckham Simon O'Hagan on Liverpool's Dominic effect

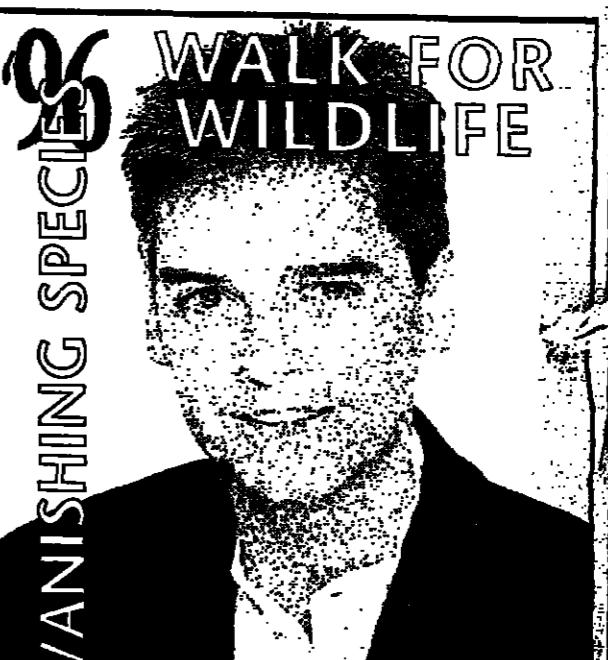
In Monday's 20-page sports section

Reports and analysis from a big weekend of sporting action

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